Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Third-party certification schemes for construction products in the United Kingdom

Prepared by Adroit Consortium for and behalf of

MHCLG

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Contents

1. Executive Summary

Overview

1.1. The tragedy of the Grenfell Tower fire and subsequent Grenfell Inquiry Reports (Phase 1 and Phase 2) revealed an inadequate historic regulatory landscape in the construction industry. For third-party certification schemes it raised significant questions about the robustness, clarity, and consistency of product certification practices in the construction sector. This report provides an examination of third-party certification schemes for construction products in the United Kingdom. It focuses on how these schemes function, their structure, and their contribution to ensuring product safety, quality, and performance.

Definition and context

1.2. This report focusses on voluntary third-party certification schemes conducting surveillance and conformity assessment activities to demonstrate whether a construction product complies with safety, quality or performance requirements.

1.3. Manufacturers opt for voluntary third-party certification to demonstrate that their products meet regulatory requirements (for example, to evidence compliance with the Building Regulations), secure warranty approvals, manage reputational risk, and demonstrate product quality to specifiers and clients. Such certification is separate to mandatory conformity assessment activities required for products under the Construction Products Regulations 2013. A decision to attain voluntary third-party certification is influenced by a range of factors including the product's function, its intended use in regulated environments, and the expectations of the supply chain.

Research methodology

1.4. The research followed six phases. It began with a scoping phase to refine objectives, followed by a literature review and desk-based research to understand current practices and regulations. A national database of third-party certification schemes was constructed using published scheme documentation and Conformity Assessment Body (CAB) websites. Eleven case study schemes were then selected for deeper analysis, chosen to reflect diversity in product types and scheme characteristics. Qualitative interviews with stakeholders complemented the database analysis. The research concluded with findings, and presentation of insights relevant to policy development and industry discussion.

Literature review insights

1.5. The literature reviews included in Annex B - Literature review and context collated insights to third-party schemes from key regulatory and industry documents. Key reports include, Building a Safer Future Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety: Final Report ("the Hackitt Report"), the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report, An Independent Review of the Construction Products Testing Regime ("the Morrell-Day Review"), as well as earlier MHCLG consultations.

1.6. These reports criticised inconsistent quality of voluntary third-party certification schemes. Issues include a lack of oversight, misleading or vague certification claims, and the absence of public trust in current processes. Recommendations included clearer testing regimes, consistent formatting, periodic re-testing, and the introduction of a national framework for scheme governance. Building on these reports, this study aims to provide greater detail on the range of voluntary third-party schemes available.

Number and usage of third-party certification schemes

1.7. Project scoping identified more than 100 third-party schemes potentially relevant to construction products in the UK, of which 55 schemes were assessed as within scope because they offer conformity assessment and surveillance and certify products against safety, quality or performance requirements.

1.8. Scheme coverage is presented using product categories defined for this research (such as materials, external elements and internal elements). These categories are an analytical structure rather than an official definition. A high-level picture of scheme numbers by category shows multiple schemes in most categories (for example 21 for materials, 23 for external elements and 22 for mechanical–electrical systems). The totals are not additive because a single scheme can cover multiple categories, and published scheme information varies in completeness. Several schemes also reported that scope can be extended to new product types.

1.9. Schemes vary widely in product coverage and technical focus. Some schemes certify a broad range of products, while others specialise in niche or high-risk areas, such as fire doors or prefabricated wall systems. The classification system developed in this project groups schemes by product type, enabling a clearer view of scheme prevalence across construction subsectors.

1.10. Evidence from interviews and published sources indicates that third-party certification uptake is highest where regulatory requirements and safety concerns are greatest, particularly for fire safety products. For lower-risk or non-safety-critical products, self-declaration is reported to be more common. The section also summarises market drivers shaping scheme use, including manufacturers’ views on cost versus market access, the influence of warranty providers, and wider concerns about the consistency of enforcement and the role of certification as an additional layer of assurance.

Cross-sectional scheme comparison

1.11. The scheme comparison sets out an analysis of eleven voluntary third-party certification schemes. These schemes gave permission to be anonymised and identified as schemes A to K. Each was reviewed using criteria drawn from warranty provider requirements, regulatory guidance and international standards. The analysis included how clearly each scheme defined product scope, addressed technical characteristics, and the transparency of its testing and surveillance methodologies.

1.12. Significant variation was observed. Reflecting the wide variety of schemes designed to fit varying market needs, some schemes provided multi-page certificates detailing test results and assessments of structural performance, moisture resistance, fire safety, installation requirements, and maintenance considerations. They also included design guidance and non-definitive statements about compatibility with Building Regulations. Other schemes focused on a single technical issue, such as fire performance.

1.13. Most schemes include ongoing surveillance, but the level of detail disclosed about this varied. Some outlined annual audits and quality management requirements online; others offered no public explanation of how ongoing compliance is assured.

1.14. Some schemes incorporated detailed installation procedures or referenced manufacturer installation manuals. Others left this entirely outside the certification scope, assuming the user would obtain it separately.

1.15. Presentation of test results was also diverse. Some certificates used tables and summaries to document testing against specified standards, while others simply listed the standards without providing outcomes or methodologies. None of the schemes reviewed appended the full test reports, although some provided references or report identification reference numbers.

1.16. The format and language of certificates overall varied considerably, even within schemes assessing similar products. This limits comparability and ease of use for specifiers, building control officers, and other stakeholders. Statements about Building Regulation compliance, where included, were typically cautious and ambiguous, often saying a product “can contribute to satisfying” regulatory requirements. While understandable, this risks confusion or misinterpretation.

1.17. Overall, the comparison shows that while some schemes demonstrate transparency and/or provide substantial information within the certification, others provide limited information and seem less transparent. This variation in schemes on the market makes it challenging for users to quickly understand equivalency or the rules of each scheme.

Use of ISO/IEC standards

1.18. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) develop globally recognised standards that provide the framework for consistent, impartial, and competent third-party certification. In the UK, key standards including ISO/IEC 17065 (requirements for certifying bodies), ISO/IEC 17067 (guidance on product certification), and ISO/IEC 17025 (competence of testing and calibration laboratories) are applied through accreditation by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), the UK’s government-appointed National Accreditation Body, ensuring certification schemes are technically sound and internationally credible.

1.19. This research explored how case study schemes adopt and align with international ISO/IEC standards, particularly 17065 and 17067.

1.20. The results revealed a lack of transparency from many schemes as to the standards each observe. The findings suggest that while ISO standards offer a consistent framework reference point, the scheme application within the framework does not seem to be standardised across the market. In practice, scheme rigour depends more on CAB processes, governance, and commercial positioning than on ISO standards.

1.21. Information on accredited CABs and the standards they apply is available on the UKAS website, primarily as individual PDF documents. This means that at the time this research was done, documents could only be compared by viewing each individual PDF. It is understood that UKAS is nearing the completion of a project to fully digitalise its accreditation schedules which should make cross-referencing and searching easier. Some CABs publish information online, although few seem to publish clear information on the standards followed.

1.22. Several schemes appeared to meet all requirements of the Assessment and Verification of Performance System 1+, the highest level of assessment required under the Construction Products Regulations 2013. This involves a factory production control system, testing and assessment of the product, inspection, continuous surveillance and audit testing of samples. Many relied on more limited or one-off assessments, with audit processes varying in frequency.

Cost assessment

1.23. Direct data on pricing was limited, with many CABs citing commercial confidentiality. However, available evidence suggests certification costs are a non-trivial burden, particularly for smaller firms. The cost may include not only the certification process itself but also compliance infrastructure, surveillance activities, and testing fees.

1.24. While some manufacturers view certification as an investment in market access and reputational assurance, others experience it as duplicative, particularly when multiple schemes assess similar characteristics in different formats. There remains a need for greater transparency and comparability in scheme pricing and service scope.

Concluding observations

1.25. This report presents an overview of the third-party certification landscape in the UK construction product sector. The findings reveal a variable market, with a focus on certain areas, such as fire safety certification and multi-attribute assessment, but also weaknesses, particularly in consistency, transparency, and clarity for end users.

1.26. The lack of transparency in scheme content, structure, surveillance, and communication creates challenges for specifiers, regulators, and manufacturers alike. The evidence suggests that while third-party certification remains a valuable tool, its reliability and usability could benefit from consistent formats, terminology, testing transparency, and access to supporting evidence. The literature review contained within Annex B outlines other serious issues in the wider regulatory framework.

2. Introduction

2.1. This introductory section defines the scope of the project, outlines the background context, sets out the project objectives, and explains the project's relevance for regulatory and policy development.

Definition and scope of third-party certification schemes

2.2. This report focusses on voluntary third-party certification schemes for construction products in the UK. These schemes conduct conformity assessment and surveillance activities to demonstrate whether a product meets specified requirements. This report concentrates on schemes which have safety, quality, or performance requirements.

2.3. In contrast, mandatory third-party assurance is required under the UK Construction Product Regulations 2013 (hereafter UK-CPR) for certain construction products. This report will not investigate mandatory certification under the UK-CPR except to outline the requirements so that both systems can be understood.

2.4. This report investigates voluntary third-party certification schemes offered by Conformity Assessment Bodies (hereafter CABs). Many CABs are accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (hereafter UKAS). CABs are defined by UKAS as a body/organisation that performs conformity assessment services and that is the object of accreditation. This includes laboratories, inspection bodies, certification bodies, verification bodies, reference material producers and proficiency testing providers.

2.5. UKAS is the National Accreditation Body under the UK Accreditation Regulations 2009. UKAS accredits CABs in accordance with national and international standards. UKAS is a non-profit distributing company and self-finances by charging fees to CABs to cover expenditures. Certification is described by UKAS as an audit of whether an organisation, product or individual, conforms to the criteria laid out in a recognised standard or scheme, such as the International Organisation for Standardisation (known as 'ISO') ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems.

2.6. This report does not include consideration of UKAS, or the activities it conducts and so does not form any conclusion on accreditation. The focus of this research is on gathering information on voluntary third-party certification schemes in the market and understanding the distinct types and qualities of the schemes. However, during stakeholder interviews with CABs, the role of UKAS was mentioned numerous times and these views are referred to where relevant to the understanding, operation or performance of voluntary third-party schemes.

Voluntary third-party certification

2.7. The Morrell-Day Review explains that voluntary third-party certification schemes have the potential to be a useful mechanism for self-regulation, with opportunities for shared learning and improvement, as well as public protection. A range of different schemes are available in the UK across many different types of construction products and systems. The report goes on to recommend that the conformity assessment process for voluntary third-party certification should follow all the requirements of the highest level of assessment and verification of conformity that exists for regulated products under the UK-CPR (AVCP Level 1+). AVCP Level 1+ comprises Factory Production Control (FPC), further testing of samples taken at manufacturing plant, assessment of performance of the product, initial inspection of the factory, continuous surveillance and audit testing of samples. See Annex B for details.

2.8. UKAS accredited CABs can certify the delivery of voluntary third-party certification schemes. Accreditation provides independent verification that the conformity assessment bodies operate in accordance with international standards. As part of its work, UKAS reviews schemes to assess and recognise that they are suitable for conformity assessment activities. Accreditation of CABs that deliver a scheme is not legally required for a scheme to operate so manufacturers may use both schemes operated by accredited or non-accredited CABs.

2.9. ISO/IEC 17000:2015 'Conformity Assessment – Vocabulary and general principles' provides the following definitions for activities undertaken by schemes which are discussed throughout the report:

- conformity assessment: demonstration that specified requirements are fulfilled;
- conformity assessment scheme**:** set of rules and procedures that describes the objects of conformity assessment, identifies the specified requirements and provides the methodology for performing conformity assessment;
- surveillance: systematic iteration of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity;
- audit: process for obtaining relevant information about an object of conformity assessment and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the specified requirements are fulfilled;
- inspection: examination of an object of conformity assessment and determination of its conformity with detailed requirements, or on the basis of professional judgement, with general requirements;
- testing: determination of one or more characteristics of an object of conformity assessment according to a procedure.

Why do manufacturers choose voluntary third-party certification?

2.10. There are four main reasons a manufacturer might choose a voluntary third-party certification scheme.

2.11. Third-party certification offers continuous compliance assurance including factory audits and ongoing surveillance. This allows manufacturers to reassure customers of the continuing quality of products.

2.12. Third-party certification helps ensure regulatory and market compliance. Many industries mandate third-party certification for legal, liability, warranty and safety reasons. In the construction industry, building work must meet The Building Regulations 2010. The Regulations (with some exceptions) have the purpose of securing reasonable standards of health and safety for persons in or about buildings. Unless manufacturers can demonstrate that products contribute to meeting the requirements of the Building Regulations, they will effectively not be able to sell to the market. Third-party certification can assist manufacturers in evidencing compliance with The Regulations.

2.13. Ongoing verification reduces risks associated with batch inconsistencies and process variations. Structural audits and surveillance ensure continuous adherence to industry standards verified by a third-party. Manufacturers use this verification to mitigate risk and assure quality.

2.14. Manufacturers consider that certification enhances customer confidence and trust, making products more attractive to buyers providing competitive advantage.

Background context

2.15. The Grenfell Tower fire tragedy in 2017 resulted in several industry reviews and reports which, amongst other topics, considered voluntary third-party certification schemes.

2.16. Dame Judith Hackitt made recommendations on third-party certification schemes and product testing in the Building a Safer Future report, which were then consulted on by MHCLG. Recommendations included increased clarity and transparency, the use of non-technical language and an increase in testing.

2.17. The Morrell-Day Review presented detailed research on the testing and certification of construction products. The Review considered that, “although the level of scrutiny provided by the best voluntary schemes may be higher than the regulatory AVCP process, the form and content of such schemes is variable, as is the degree of rigour and independence of oversight - and consequently the trust that the market might want to place in products covered by the schemes.”

2.18. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report provides wide ranging recommendations, some specific to product certification. Recommendations called for the availability of reliable information on construction products because of misleading information issued by manufacturers.

2.19. These reports are reviewed in more detail in Annex B - Literature review and context.

Objectives of the report

2.20. This report outlines information and evidence on the coverage, variation, and quality of third-party certification schemes in the market. The objectives are:

Assessment of available third-party certification schemes

2.21. Recording all available schemes in the UK and which products each scheme certifies. Understanding who the scheme operators are and whether they publish certificates online.

Cross-sectional comparison of scheme components

2.22. Select case studies to illustrate diverse types of certification schemes which cover several types of products. For each case study scheme present a breakdown of the component parts of a cross-section of different schemes in order to understand their differences. To note, the government does not advocate for, or against, any particular third-party certification scheme.

A qualitative analysis of schemes

2.23. An in-depth analysis of the case study schemes, based on the breakdown of the component parts.

Use of ISO/IEC standards

2.24. An analysis of the International Organisation for Standardisation/International Electrotechnical Commission (hereafter ISO/IEC) Standards used by case study schemes.

Cost range assessment

2.25. The high-level costs for certifying construction products for the different case study schemes.

Explanation of project relevance to regulatory and policy development in the UK construction sector

2.26. The UK construction sector operates within a complex regulatory framework aiming to ensure safety, quality, and compliance. The Morrell-Day Review explains that voluntary third-party certification schemes have the potential to be a useful mechanism for self-regulation. The Review did not investigate in detail the content of schemes themselves. This report aims to available in the market now to support regulatory and policy development.

2.27. This report examines voluntary third-party certification schemes operated by CABs with 11 schemes investigated in detail. All the CABs delivering the 11 schemes are themselves UKAS accredited. These CABs are required under their UKAS accreditation to operate with competence and impartiality outlined in international standards, such as ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO/IEC 17067. However, UKAS do not accredit the individual schemes. UKAS publishes a schedule of accreditation for each CAB. It sets the scope of activities for which the CAB has been accredited by UKAS under the relevant standard. Where the CAB has been assessed successfully for a particular scheme, that will be included in the schedule. Of the 11 CABs, six of the schemes are included in the associated CAB's schedule of accreditation, the other five schemes are not.

2.28. The findings are particularly relevant for policy makers in light of the reports cited which identified weaknesses in certification processes, emphasising the need for stronger oversight and regulatory alignment to enhance safety in the built environment.

3. Methodology

3.1. This section outlines the methodology used to investigate third-party certification schemes in the UK construction products sector. The study assesses these schemes' scope, structure, and impact through a research process which draws on literature reviews, stakeholder engagement, data analysis, and comparison. The methodology ensures systematic data collection and analysis, producing findings that will inform policymakers and contribute to the evidence base for regulatory and industry discussions.

Overview of methodology phases

3.2. The methodology includes six interrelated phases, designed to ensure a thorough and systematic approach:

- a short scoping phase, as a foundation for the work, which concluded with a workshop with MHCLG colleagues to refine the focus, agree priorities, and ensure the project work aligns with MHCLG's objectives;
- literature review and desk research - examining existing sources to establish the research foundation;
- data collection and compilation - constructing a database of third-party certification schemes;
- qualitative research - conducting stakeholder interviews and in-depth case study analysis;
- stakeholder interviews were conducted via an online video call, each lasting approximately one hour. One of the interviews was held in person and included a tour of testing facilities;
- data analysis and synthesis - Identifying trends, assessing variations, and mapping certification schemes to standards.

3.3. The findings were then brought together into a report. The following sections cover the work in each phase, following the initial scoping.

Literature review and desk research

3.4. This phase provided a contextual foundation by reviewing existing studies, regulatory frameworks, and industry reports relevant to third-party certification schemes. See Annex B of this report for details on the methodology and details of the literature review.

Third-party certification schemes database

Selection criteria and ‘in scope’ schemes

3.5. This report reviews voluntary third-party certification schemes which carry out conformity assessment and surveillance to demonstrate whether a product complies with safety, quality or performance requirements.

3.6. Schemes which provide certification on sourcing of material (such as the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) mark for sustainably sourced timber) or schemes certifying on the embodied carbon in a product are out of scope for this study. This is because neither of these certifications carry out conformity assessment on safety, quality, or performance requirements.

3.7. Schemes which certify an entire building and do not also examine the individual construction products or components for safety, quality or performance are not included within the scope of this study.

3.8. Many organisations provide testing in accordance with a standard. Although it is a conformity assessment activity, single testing without any additional surveillance activity is not within the scope of this study. However, such test data can be used as part of the conformity assessment activities of third-party certification schemes. Schemes will compare test data to requirements in regulations, British and European Standards and other industry guidance. If test data demonstrates a product meets these requirements, a scheme can certify a product can be used for a particular purpose in a building.

Data collection and database development

3.9. For each type of construction product, regulations (such as The Building Regulations), associated statutory guidance (for example Approved Document B), and other industry guidance (such as the Centre for Windows and Cladding Technology guidance documents) will set out particular British or European standard(s) a product should meet. A scheme will decide which standards are relevant to a product based on this statutory and non-statutory guidance, and often the scheme’s own industry knowledge. However, not all schemes publish this information and so it is difficult, sometimes impossible, to find out which standards are used for each scheme and product.

3.10. UKAS publishes a searchable database of accredited CABs providing product certification under different product categories. One category is the Construction Product Regulations. All CABs accredited by UKAS to carry out product certification under the Construction Product Regulations have been reviewed to ascertain if they offer voluntary third-party certification schemes.

3.11. UKAS provides a PDF ‘Schedule of Accreditation’ document which can be downloaded for each CAB. These documents are tables that set out the scope of accreditation under the standard, including regulations such as the UK-CPR requirements as well as, where relevant, listing voluntary third-party certification schemes. Information on the scope of a CAB’s accreditation is presented in varying ways.

3.12. Firstly, some include a table with a column of construction product types against a column containing the applicable standard such as British/European standards or third-party certification scheme name.

3.13. Secondly, the scheme name is included under the construction product column, and the British and European standard used as part of the scheme is included in the standards column.

3.14. Thirdly, the Schedule of Accreditation for several CABs includes a ‘flexible scope’. This means the CAB can certify specific products based on demonstrable competence but with a level of flexibility in the conformity assessment activity and the standard used (for example a new version of a standard). A flexible scope allows a CAB to make changes to the scheme, as long as the changes do not reduce the confidence in the outcome of the specific conformity assessment activity.

3.15. These three examples demonstrate different ways information on third-party certification schemes is presented. Because of this it is difficult or sometimes not possible to understand which standards are used as part of which scheme based on UKAS information alone. Although further information can be requested from scheme owners (it is a requirement of their accreditation).

3.16. Many CABs have schemes which are not included in their scope of accredited activities published in their UKAS Schedule of Accreditation. These schemes are included in the scope of this study to capture as wide a range of schemes as possible in the market. Information on such schemes is published on the scheme operator’s (CAB’s) website. The level of detail provided varies. For many schemes it is not possible to understand which standards products are tested to.

3.17. In summary, to collate data on third-party certification schemes provided by CABs, information from both the UKAS website and individual CAB websites was reviewed. The format and structure of Schedule of Accreditation documents differs between CABs. In some cases, the applicable scheme and associated standards are listed clearly; in others, broad descriptors or flexible scopes are used. Information published on CABs’ own websites also varies in format and level of detail. As a result, it was not always easy to determine whether all relevant third-party certification schemes had been identified. It is therefore possible that some schemes meeting the scope of this study may not have been captured.

Database compilation challenges/limitations

3.18. As the database was developed challenges or potential limitations were noted:

- variability in publicly available data: some CABs publish extensive details, while others disclose minimal information;
- scheme complexity: different schemes certify products in varied ways, making direct comparison challenging. Scheme rules are often difficult to find or not available easily from the websites;
- confidentiality barriers: some certification schemes are reluctant to disclose cost structures or assessment methodologies citing commercial confidentiality;

- access to information and clarity: despite extensive cross-checking it is possible that there may be database inaccuracies due to incomplete, inaccurate or difficult to navigate websites.

Sampling and selection criteria for case studies

3.19. Eleven voluntary third-party certification schemes were chosen from the database to investigate to understand the range of schemes available in the UK. These eleven third-party certification schemes will be referred to as Schemes A-K. The schemes have been anonymised to allow for an overall view of the industry but without bringing focus or opinion on a particular scheme. The eleven were selected aiming to cover a range of construction product types which provide certification against a range of quality, safety and performance requirements:

- four large schemes which certify a wide range of construction products against different requirements;
- one well-known scheme which certifies a range of products;
- three schemes focusing on fire safety certification;
- two schemes focussed on off-site construction;
- one scheme which certifies electrical systems.

Data analysis and synthesis

3.20. Case study schemes were compared and analysed against:

- a specific building warranty provider’s requirements for third-party certification;
- ‘ISO/IEC 17067:2013 Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes’;
- whether the CAB publishes certification information.

Building warranty requirements

3.21. It was decided to analyse the component parts of the schemes from the perspective of those using certification to select construction products (generally known as ‘specifiers’). This allows a comparison between schemes as well as insights as to which elements of schemes are most successful and useful for those selecting products.

3.22. Warranty and insurance companies provide insurance cover for latent defects for new buildings or renovation work. They require building work to be completed to meet their own technical standards, in addition to the Building Regulations. The warranty provider’s own technical standards contain a section on construction products. This section includes a guide for specifiers for what the warranty providers look for within third-party certification, to enable the warranty provider to decide if a product is suitable.

3.23. Premiere Guarantee is one such company providing insurance cover for defects. Table 3.1 (shown on page 18) includes a summary of the requirements contained within Annex C of Premiere Guarantee's Technical Manual Version 14 and its guidance notes 'Guide to Third-Party Product Conformity Approval Certificates'.

3.24. Premiere Guarantee's requirements are an illustrative example of the type of information warranty providers look for. It is a useful list because it mirrors the information those working in the industry will be looking for when they are deciding which product to select to use in a building. In addition, because the requirements are not limited to a particular product type, the list can be applied to all types of construction products and used to compare schemes certifying different products. Requirements include whether the certificate is valid, information on scope of the certificate, key technical assessment points, information on the manufacturing process, oversight and surveillance, installation requirements, compliance with applicable regulation, and testing. It is noted that not all the key technical assessment points will apply to all products.

Table 3.1 Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14, Key Requirements for Third-party Conformity Approval Certificates Summary

Key requirement	Summary of key requirement
Validity	Is it dated and any revision dates? When does it becomes invalid? Is the certificate available on the certifier's website?
Scope	Product description Intended use of product and in what context What are the product or system components? Have all the components been tested? Does the QA/manufacturing assessment include all components? Does it identify components which are out of scope?
Key technical assessment points	Structural integrity Fire Safety Thermal performance Acoustic characteristics Movement characteristics Safety in use (when appropriate) Vapour permeability and moisture resistance characteristics Water tightness/penetration (exposure location rating?) Release of dangerous substances Compatibility of materials and components Durability and longevity including lifespan Maintenance requirements and provisions
Surveillance	Manufacturing process oversight and surveillance
Installation	Installation requirements
Regulation	Does the product meet Building Regulations?
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone

Sources:
1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration
2) Note: Requirements used as an illustrative example and are not an endorsement of Premiere Guarantee's services. A wide variety of warranty services are available in the market.

ISO/IEC standards

3.25. 'ISO/IEC 17067:2013 Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes' provides guidance on the process for schemes. It includes examples of different types of schemes. Guidance is provided for schemes that meet 17067 'type 5 schemes' definition. Type 5 schemes are noted as an often used and well-tried model for a product certification scheme. A summary of the guidance on the functions and activities Type 5 schemes is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 ISO/IEC 17067:2013 Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes. Type 5 summary

Conformity assessment functions and activities within product certification schemes	**Detail of activity or function**
Selection	Including planning and preparation activities, specification of requirements e.g. normative documents, and sampling as applicable
Determination of Characteristics	Testing Inspection Design appraisal Assessment of services or processes Other determination activities, e.g. verification
Review	Examining the evidence of conformity obtained during the determination stage to establish whether the specified requirements have been met
Decision on certification	Granting, maintaining, extending, reducing, suspending, or withdrawing certification
Attestation, licensing	Issuing a statement of conformity Granting the right to use certificates, marks or other statements of conformity on products conforming to the specified requirements (licensing)
Surveillance	Testing or inspection of samples from the open market Testing or inspection of samples from the factory Assessment of the production, the delivery of the service or the operation of the process Management system audits combined with random tests or inspections

Source: Introducing ISO/IEC 17067:2013

3.26. Where the information is available, the case study schemes were compared against the conformity assessment functions and activities under type 5 schemes.

4. Findings and analysis

Introduction

4.1. This chapter sets out the findings from the research into voluntary third-party certification schemes for construction products in the UK. It draws on desktop research and stakeholder interviews to describe the current scheme landscape, assess how schemes are used in the market, and examine how schemes compare in terms of content, transparency, standards alignment and indicative costs.

4.2. The chapter is organised into six sections:

1) **Number and usage of third-party certification schemes** maps schemes in scope and summarises scheme coverage across product categories and product types, before considering market adoption and drivers of use.

2) **Cross-sectional comparison of scheme components** then compares key elements across the case-study schemes to show how scheme structure and processes vary.

3) **Building warranty providers' requirements** provide a specifier perspective, using warranty requirements to test whether scheme certificates and supporting information provide the types of assurance and detail that users commonly look for.

4) **Transparency and access to information through the Web** assesses how easily manufacturers, specifiers and other users can identify scheme scope and verify certification status using publicly available online information.

5) **Use of ISO/IEC and other standards** summarises the standards frameworks relevant to product certification and considers how these are reflected in scheme design and operation.

6) **Cost range assessment** then draws together available evidence on indicative cost ranges and the factors that drive variation.

4.3. Together, these sections provide a structured view of both the scale of the scheme market and the practical features that shape scheme credibility, usability and uptake.

Number and usage of third-party certification schemes

4.4. This section provides an overview of the voluntary third-party certification schemes identified through the research. It is structured in 2 parts.

4.5. The first part helps the reader understand the breadth and depth of scheme activity across different types of construction products, and where scheme coverage appears more or less concentrated.

4.6. The second part draws on stakeholder interviews and supporting literature to assess market adoption and drivers of scheme use. It considers how certification is used to support claims relating to trust, safety, quality and performance, and how scheme usage is viewed by different actors in the construction sector.

Number of third-party certification schemes in the UK

4.7. Project scoping found more than 100 third-party certification schemes for construction products in the UK. Each scheme was assessed. Schemes offering conformity assessment and surveillance services that certify products meeting safety, quality or performance requirements were determined to be in the scope of the research.

4.8. The analysis identified 55 voluntary third-party certification schemes for construction products in the UK which are in the scope of the research.

Scheme numbers by product category and product type

4.9. Scheme numbers are grouped using product categories defined for this research (for example, materials; external elements; internal elements). These groupings are an analytical structure to organise the evidence and do not represent an official or statutory definition of construction products.

4.10. Analysis of publicly available information on each of the 55 schemes in scope is used to determine the number of schemes covering each product category. Table 4.1 shows the results of that analysis.

Table 4.1 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category

Product category	Number of schemes
Materials	21
External elements	23
Internal elements	15
Connections and interfaces	10
Compounds, mixtures and additives	2
Mechanical-electrical systems	22
Water and waste	3

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.11. Table 4.1 provides a high-level summary of the number of voluntary third-party certification schemes identified for each construction product category. The numbers should be interpreted as an indication of where scheme activity is more or less concentrated across product categories, rather than a measure of scheme size, capacity, market share or regulatory significance. This presentation of scheme numbers indicates the breadth and diversity of the market with multiple schemes available in most product categories.

4.12. A single scheme can cover multiple product categories, so the category totals are not intended to be added together and exceed the number of unique schemes in scope. It should be noted that given the various ways scheme information is published, it is possible that some schemes may cover more product categories and products than those identified by the analysis.

4.13. In addition, several of the schemes explained that if they are approached with a type of product they have not certified before they will assess the requirements and may be able to use their flexible scope to certify the product.

4.14. Schemes focus on different products in each product category so to represent the depth of the market, the analysis subdivides each product category into specific product types covered by each scheme. Analysis of each scheme is used to identify which product type is covered.

4.15. Tables 4.2 to 4.8 show the number of third-party schemes by construction product category and by product type. Each Table is followed by brief observations drawn from the research.

4.16. Table 4.2 summarises the number of schemes that include construction materials such as aggregates, concrete and gypsum products, metals, glass, and wood-based products.

Table 4.2 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category - Materials

Product	Number of schemes
Aggregates	2
Concrete, cement and gypsum products	6
Clay and stone	2
Wood and cork	7
Metals	5
Glass products	7

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.17. Scheme activity is spread across most material types, with the highest counts in wood and cork and glass products (7 schemes each), followed by concrete, cement and gypsum products (6). Aggregates and clay and stone have comparatively fewer schemes (2 each), which may reflect the more foundational nature of the materials and possibly a lower more limited set of scheme models in these areas or differences in how scope is described publicly.

4.18. Table 4.3 shows the number of schemes certifying external elements such as cladding and roofing, thermal and moisture protection, doors and windows, and prefabricated structures.

Table 4.3 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category - external elements

Product	Number of schemes
Cladding and roofing	15
Thermal and moisture protection	9
Doors, windows and openings	16
Prefabricated structures	9

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.19. The largest counts are for doors, windows and openings (16 schemes) and cladding and roofing (15 schemes). Thermal and moisture protection and prefabricated structures show lower but still substantial coverage (9 schemes each).

4.20. The concentration of schemes in these categories is consistent with the importance of external envelope performance and installation interfaces and the wide variety of different product and system types.

4.21. Table 4.4 shows the number of schemes certifying internal elements and fit-out related products including wall, ceiling and flooring systems, finishes and coatings, and a range of service and access-related internal products.

Table 4.4 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category - Internal elements

Product	Number of schemes
Sanitaryware and plumbing products	2
Pipes and valves	3
Ducts and chutes	8
Tanks and storage	2
Tunnels, shafts and towers	1
Signage and wayfinding	1
Stairs, railings and balustrades	1
Wall systems	4
Ceiling systems	3
Flooring and floor systems	2
Finishes and coatings	7

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.22. Coverage is uneven across internal product areas. The highest counts are for ducts and chutes (8 schemes) and finishes and coatings (7 schemes). Several categories show only one scheme identified (tunnels/shafts/towers; signage/wayfinding; stairs/railings/balustrades), which may reflect niche activity or limited publicly described scheme scope. Wall systems (4 schemes) and ceiling systems (3 schemes) indicate moderate scheme presence relative to other internal categories listed.

4.23. Tabe 4.5 shows the number of schemes certifying connections and interfaces such fixings and supports, joints and trims, sealants, mortars, grouts and adhesives.

Table 4.5 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category - Connections and interfaces

Product	Number of schemes
Fixings, fastenings and supports	6
Joints, trims and sealants	9
Mortars and grouts	3
Adhesives	3

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.24. The highest coverage is for joints, trims and sealants (9 schemes) and fixings, fastenings and supports (6 schemes). Mortars and grouts and adhesives each show 3 schemes. These interface categories are important because they can influence overall system performance.

4.25. Table 4.6 shows the number of schemes certifying compounds, mixtures and additives within their published scope, such as chemical products and treatments, and additives/admixtures.

Table 4.6 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category - Compounds, mixtures and additives

Product	Number of schemes
Chemical products and treatments	2
Additives and admixtures	1

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.26. This category has the lowest number of schemes identified: chemical products and treatments (2 schemes) and additives and admixtures (1 scheme). This may reflect that certification approaches for these products are structured differently as many products in this category are subject to separate legal requirements (for example UK REACH).

4.27. Table 4.7 shows the number of schemes certifying mechanical and electrical systems. This includes heating and cooling, ventilation, lighting, power and communications, security systems, sensors/controls, lifts, and fire suppression and protection products.

Table 4.7 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category – Mechanical - electrical systems

Product	Number of schemes
Heating and cooling	8
Ventilation and air handling products	6
Lighting	3
Lifts, escalators and conveying systems	1
Power and communications	9
Security systems products	4
Sensors, detection and controls	4
Fire suppression and protection products	13

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.28. The largest count is for fire suppression and protection products (13 schemes), followed by power and communications (9) and heating and cooling (8). Ventilation and air handling products also show material scheme coverage (6), while lifts/escalators/conveying systems show only 1 scheme identified in scope.

4.29. The distribution reflects the broad nature of this product category, the complexity and variety of products and that voluntary scheme activity is particularly prominent in some safety-critical and building-services-related categories.

4.30. Table 4.8 shows the number of schemes certifying water supply and waste-related products within their published scope, including water supply/filtration/treatment products and waste disposal.

Table 4.8 Voluntary third-party certification schemes by construction product category - Water and waste

Product	Number of schemes
Water supply, filtration and treatment products	3
Waste disposal	2

Source: Adroit desktop research

4.31. Fewer schemes were identified in this area compared with external elements and building services: water supply, filtration and treatment products (3 schemes) and waste disposal (2 schemes).

Usage of Schemes

4.32. This section of the report presents an assessment of the market adoption and drivers of third-party certification schemes. The analysis presented draws on a thematic analysis of stakeholder interviews, placing the views expressed in the context of industry reports.

4.33. The section also highlights use cases provided in interviews where certification supports claims relating to trust, safety, quality, and performance, and examines how certification is used by specifiers and other key actors in the construction sector.

MARKET ADOPTION OF SCHEMES ACROSS PRODUCT CATEGORIES

4.34. Third-party certification uptake is highest for products that have life safety risks, particularly fire safety products. The Hackitt Report (2018) highlighted the need for independent third-party testing for fire safety products to prevent unsafe substitutions. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report (2024) identified “systematic dishonesty” of some manufacturers and their “deliberate and sustained strategies to manipulate the testing processes, misrepresent test data and mislead the market” to be a “very significant reason why the Grenfell Tower came to be clad in combustible materials”. It went on to conclude that:

“those strategies succeeded partly because the certification bodies that provided assurance to the market of the quality and characteristics of the products, the British Board of Agrément (BBA) and Local Authority Building Control (LABC), failed to ensure that the statements in their product certificates were accurate and based on test evidence.”

DIVERGENCE BY PRODUCT RISK LEVEL

4.35. For products considered to have lower safety risks, reliance on self-declaration, rather than third-party certification is common due to lower regulatory requirements.

4.36. The Morrell-Day Review found that voluntary third-party certification schemes have considerable influence in the market, noting that “the form and content of such schemes is variable, as is the degree of rigour and independence of oversight - and consequently the trust that the market might want to place in products covered by the schemes." Recent research published alongside this report indicates that 33%-69% of product sales are covered by the UK-CPR.

4.37. The stakeholder evidence confirms that regulatory scrutiny directly influences third-party certification adoption, with safety-critical products subject to higher uptake.

MANUFACTURER PERSPECTIVES & MARKET DRIVERS

Cost vs. Market Access

4.38. Costs of voluntary third-party certification per product certified ranges significantly from under £5,000 to £100,000 and above for complex systems.

4.39. Our research found that some manufacturers see certification as a barrier, while others view it as a necessity for credibility and market differentiation.

Influence of Warranty Providers

4.40. Warranty providers' role in shaping certification demand is supported by Building Warranty Providers' Requirements, which mandate that certified products meet the warranty providers' technical standards as well as the Building Regulations.

4.41. Stakeholder consultations (as referenced in Building a Safer Future Consultation, 2019) confirmed that warranty requirements often exceed regulatory baselines, effectively making third-party certification a prerequisite for market access in some product categories.

4.42. The requirements of warranty providers are used as part of the comparative analysis process within this report. There is strong evidence that manufacturers' perspectives on certification are influenced by both cost concerns and the necessity for market access. Warranty providers act as key intermediaries in enabling market access and enforcing higher certification requirements.

Certification as a Risk Mitigation Tool

4.43. The Morrell-Day Review recognises that some third-party certification schemes enable a higher level of scrutiny than regulatory AVCP processes, offering additional assurance whilst others were of varying rigour.

4.44. The role of third-party certification as a risk management tool is well-documented in international standards guidance. ISO's Committee on Conformity Assessment (CASCO) notes that conformity assessment, including third-party certification, helps regulators implement public policy, ensures compliance with safety and quality requirements, and enables corrective actions where necessary. It goes on to say that when used appropriately, certification supports market efficiency while protecting health, safety, and the environment. These functions are particularly important in areas where regulatory enforcement is weak or inconsistently applied, where third-party schemes may provide assurance.

Concerns on Enforcement Consistency

4.45. The Hackitt Report recommended that the "*testing of products that are critical to the safety of HRRBs* [Higher Risk Residential Buildings] *should be subject to independent third party certification".*

4.46. Weak regulatory oversight has been a critical concern in the UK construction sector. The Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report highlighted serious failures in enforcement, describing the regulatory regime as "woefully deficient and fragmented" and considered that deregulation was prioritised over safety.

4.47. Stakeholder interviews also mentioned issues of enforcement consistency and underscored the importance of certification in providing an additional layer of scrutiny.

Cross-sectional comparison of scheme components

Case Study Schemes

4.48. This section includes a comparative analysis of the 11 case study third-party certification schemes. Each scheme has been analysed through/against:

- an illustrative example of a building warranty provider's requirements for third-party certification;
- available information published by the CAB.

4.49. The eleven schemes are all operated by UKAS accredited CABs. However not all the schemes identified fall under the accredited scope of those CABs. UKAS accredits CABs in relation to the delivery of six of the schemes.

4.50. If the body delivering a scheme is UKAS accredited, it provides independent verification that it is competent to deliver conformity assessment under the scheme. The review of the scheme against ISO/IEC 17067 determines whether the scheme can be recognised for conformity assessment. Accreditation of CABs delivering a scheme is not legally required for a scheme to operate and schemes operated by accredited as well as non-accredited bodies are well used in the market. See the Stakeholder analysis section of this report for feedback on the accreditation process from the perspective of CABs.

4.51. The Schemes (A-K) are introduced in the paragraphs 4.53 to 4.63.

Scheme A

4.52. A wide range of construction products and systems are certified under Scheme A against a wide range of technical requirements. Its approval activities include design assessments and considering test evidence. Scheme A does not carry out any testing itself. Each product or system will be individually considered to determine which standards the product will be assessed against. Scheme A uses European and British Standards as well as other standards developed by industry. The scheme does not fall under the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme B

4.53. Under Scheme B, CABs certify a wide range of construction products and systems against a wide range of technical requirements. This CAB also operates an accredited testing laboratory, as well as accepting test results from other UKAS accredited test laboratories. Schemes A and B are both large, well-known schemes in the industry and were included to understand what tells them apart. Scheme B is included in the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme C

4.54. Under Scheme C, the CAB certifies a range of construction products and systems against safety requirements. Its conformity assessment activities include assessing products and systems against international standards because the scheme is predominantly used to access markets outside the UK. Scheme C is included in the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme D

4.55. Scheme D is a long running, well known scheme under which CABs certify a range of products. Their conformity assessment activities involve assessing a product against the applicable British or European Standard. Scheme D is included in the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme E

4.56. Under Scheme E, CABs certify construction products focussing on fire safety and security. Products are assessed against a standard written for the scheme. Scheme E is included in the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme F

4.57. Under Scheme F, CABs certify construction products focussing on fire safety. Their conformity assessment activities include determining whether products and systems meet a range of European and British standards. Scheme F is included in the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme G

4.58. Under Scheme G, CABs certify construction products focussing on fire safety. Their conformity assessment activities include determining whether products and systems meet a range of European and British standards. Scheme G is included in the accredited scope of the CAB.

Scheme H

4.59. Scheme H certifies electrical systems. Their approval activities include determining whether products meet European standards. The CAB running the scheme is based in the EU but recently established in the UK. Scheme H is not included in the CAB's scope of UKAS accreditation.

Scheme I

4.60. Scheme I certifies off-site construction systems. Approval activities include determining the characteristics of the products that go into each system as well as assessing the process of putting together the products to form a system. The assessment is based on European, British and industry standards as well their own experience in the industry. Scheme I is not included in the CAB's scope of UKAS accreditation.

Scheme J

4.61. Scheme J certifies off-site construction systems. Approval activities include a risk assessment process and durability assessments of individual products which go into each system. Scheme J is not included in the CAB's scope of UKAS accreditation.

Scheme K

4.62. Under Scheme K, CABs certify construction products focussing on fire safety The conformity assessment activities include determining whether products and systems meet European and British standards. Scheme K is not included in the CAB's scope of UKAS accreditation.

Building warranty providers' requirements

4.63. Different parties in the construction industry such as designers, contractors and developers select construction products for use as part of building works. In this report they are referred to as specifiers. Specifiers review third-party certification to understand if a product is suitable for an intended use. The building warranty providers' requirements are a guide for specifiers of what to look for and to understand if the certificate will be acceptable to the warranty provider. The requirements are a guide to the information specifiers generally need to understand when determining whether the product is suitable for an intended use. The requirements are therefore a useful framework to assess the schemes against from the perspective of a specifier in the construction industry.

4.64. Each of the eleven case study schemes has been analysed against an illustrative building warranty provider's requirements. The full analysis for each scheme is in Annex C. The analysis for Scheme A is shown in Table 4.9 below as an example. It summarises the contents of a certificate for an external wall cladding system. The Scheme A certificate includes information on validity, scope of the certification, technical information, information on surveillance of the manufacturing process, installation requirements, whether the system meets regulations, and information on testing.

Table 4.9 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme A's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	**Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14**	**Third-party certification Scheme A. Cladding system certificate**
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When it becomes invalid?	Dated and revision dates
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	Yes
	Intended use and in what context	Yes
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Some, not all
	Identify components which are out of scope of the certification	Partly
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	Yes
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	Yes
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	Yes
	Water tightness/penetration	Yes
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of components	Limited Information
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	Some information
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	Yes
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Yes (QMS and PQS (Production Quality Specification), Annual verification procedure)
Installation	Installation	Yes (Includes details and refers to Installation Manual. Installation by Approved Installer)
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations	Yes (Non-definitive statements)
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification Scheme A certificate for a cladding system

Validity

4.65. A certificate may be invalid because:

- it has passed an expiry date;
- standards have been revised since initial certification and the product no longer meets current standards;
- iterative surveillance activities have ceased;
- the product may have changed and so the certificate no longer represents the product on the market; or
- the certificate is counterfeit.

4.66. The validity period of the case study schemes' certificates vary between one to ten years. After the certification period, a reassessment is then carried out and, depending on the scheme's rules, this can include new testing. All the scheme certificates display the date the certificate was issued. Schemes D, F, G and I certificates also include an expiry date.

4.67. Including an expiry date is helpful to specifiers because if the certification is within the expiry date, then surveillance activities will be ongoing. If surveillance activities are ongoing then issues such as changes in the make-up of the product can be picked up by the CAB carrying out testing of samples or identifying changes in production processes.

4.68. Specifiers can confirm certificates are valid by locating the latest version online, where available. Many certificates include notes such as Scheme D: *"To check its validity telephone … An electronic certificate can be authenticated online."* Similarly, Scheme F certificate includes footnote *"To check the validity of the certificate and Annex please visit www…., scan the QR tag or contact us."* All certificates were available to download from the certifier's websites except for Schemes D, I, and J. Scheme D lists valid certificates online but they are not available for download. Scheme I requires you to contact the CAB to check validity. Scheme J provides a database of certified companies online with details of the scope of their certification.

4.69. Scheme E publishes lists of suspensions, withdrawals, counterfeit certificates and invalid claims of certification on its website.

Scope

4.70. Specifiers selecting construction products need to know the scope of the third-party certification. This means which product or system is certified; which other products it can be used with; and in what context. For example, an external wall typically is made up of an inner wall and an outer wall with a cavity between. The combustibility of the full external wall system will depend on all the layers of a wall and the fixings used to connect the outer wall to the inner wall.

4.71. Information on the scope of the certification could include:

- a product description;
- information on the intended use and in what context. The context for example could be with which type of inner wall structure the outer wall cladding has been tested with;
- what all the product/system components are;
- if all the components have been tested or certified;
- which components are out of scope.

4.72. Many schemes included a product description. Schemes D, E, G, I, and J do not. Schemes A, B and C include illustrations and detailed descriptions of the product/systems which make it clear exactly what the product is. Schemes A, B and C also include information on the intended use and in what context.

4.73. Scheme E references a separate document which contains key information on the product but this document could not be located on the manufacturer's website nor from the manufacturer directly because the certificate did not contain the full reference. This demonstrates one danger with referencing documents rather than binding them into the certification. In contrast, the Scheme F certificate includes a 'Product Data Sheet' including detailed technical information. The introduction to the certificate explains that if the data sheet is not appended as part of the certificate, then the certificate is invalid.

4.74. Schemes included a range of detail on the system components. Schemes A, B, C and F all include information on the component parts of the product, where the product can be used, and identify components which are out of scope. However, across all schemes it was generally not clear whether all the component parts had been tested and to which standards, and whether any surveillance applied to the manufacture of the individual components. Only Schemes A and B included statements on components which were out of scope.

Technical assessment points

4.75. Warranty provider 'Premier Guarantee' explains in Annex C of version 14 of its Technical Manual: "Where a third-party approval is proposed to demonstrate meeting our Technical Manual requirements …. the third-party conformity approval certificate 'should cover' the following areas, relevant to the use of the product". The areas are: structural integrity; fire safety; thermal performance; acoustic characteristics; movement characteristics; safety in use; vapour permeability and moisture resistance; water tightness; release of dangerous substances; compatibility of materials and components; durability; and maintenance requirements. Not all of these areas will apply to every product. If a scheme does not provide information on a topic, it may be due to the product type rather than an omission in the scheme.

4.76. To aid comparison across schemes, certificates for insulated external wall cladding systems have been chosen for analysis for Schemes A, B, C, E and I. Scheme A and B certificates contain wide ranging and detailed information across most of the technical areas. Schemes C and E focus on fire safety. Scheme I certificate does not contain any technical information.

4.77. Schemes A and B include design appraisals and assessments of certain technical characteristics (in addition to presenting test results to British or European Standards and Industry Standards). For example, an example of a Scheme A certificate states *“The System will provide a degree of protection against rainwater ingress. However, care shall be taken to ensure that the supporting walls are adequately weathertight prior to installation of the system”.* And Scheme B, *“In the opinion of [Scheme B] , the … External Wall Insulation System, if installed, used and maintained in accordance with this Certificate, can satisfy or contribute to satisfying the relevant requirements in relation to…”* This is key information for a specifier.

4.78. Whereas Scheme D only lists the British or European Standard the product has been tested against with no comment.

4.79. Maintenance requirements are important areas for specifiers to understand. For example, external timber cladding may achieve a certain performance such as fire resistance if treated with a coating. Over time the coating will weather and will need to be re-applied to maintain the required performance. Only schemes A, B, F and J include a section on maintenance in the certificates.

4.80. Overall, to a specifier, the schemes which certify against a wide range of technical qualities provide thorough information of a product or system. However, schemes such as Scheme F provides valuable specialised in-depth information on fire safety.

Surveillance

4.81. Surveillance is defined in ISO/IEC 17000:2020 as the systematic iteration of conformity assessment activities as a basis for maintaining the validity of the statement of conformity. ISO/IEC 17067:2013 sets out that surveillance activities include:

- testing or inspection of samples from the open market;
- testing or inspection of samples from the factory;
- assessment of the production, the delivery of the service or the operation of the process;
- management system audits combined with random tests or inspections.

4.82. Including information on surveillance activities in certificates can give specifiers confidence in the continuing quality of a product. All but one of the case study schemes include some information on surveillance activities in their certificates (Scheme I is the exception). This information is described with differing terms for possibly similar activities which has made comparing schemes challenging for the authors of this report. However, the analysis reveals some differences important to specifiers. For example, Schemes J and D require a continuous improvement loop; Scheme J, a scheme certifying off-site construction systems, requires contractors to communicate with residents to record and resolve defects. Contractors must demonstrate a reduction in defects over time. This scheme is based on a hazard and operability study to identify and reduce risks in the system.

4.83. Scheme I does not include any ongoing surveillance. Instead, each certificate is only valid for a year. To renew the certification further conformity assessment activities are required each year.

Installation requirements

4.84. How a construction product is installed will affect how the product performs. For example, fire door assemblies must be tightly fitted into the surrounding wall with a maximum permissible gap between door frame and wall. This maximum gap will be included in the fire tests. If a large gap is left when the product is installed, the door may not perform as tested.

4.85. Installation requirements are contained in some certificates but not others. Scheme A's certificate includes installation details, references an installation manual and requires that installation be by an approved installer trained by the manufacturer. Scheme B is similar but the installers must be either approved, recommended or recognised by the manufacturer. Scheme E references a document including installation requirements. Scheme F includes installation instructions and references a manufacturer installation document. Scheme I for pre-manufactured components only includes an option to certify installer competence.

4.86. CABs operating Schemes A, B, and F also offer approved installer schemes. For cavity wall insulation, Scheme A has a mandatory requirement for approved installers to be certified by the CAB; in an interview, the CAB explained that this requirement is because the CAB believes there is a large number of installation defects in this area. Schemes C and D contain no requirements for installation; although manufacturers publish separate installation guides.

4.87. Overall, the schemes demonstrate a range of installation requirements. From certifying installers to having no requirements at all.

Regulation

4.88. Specifiers design buildings to meet the Building Regulations. To do this they check if products meet certain minimum technical standards set out in statutory guidance such as Approved Documents or other pieces of industry guidance. A single construction product in isolation cannot meet the Building Regulations, as it depends on the rest of the building construction. So, although some scheme certificates (Schemes A and B) include statements on whether products meet the Building Regulations, these statements need to be carefully written so as to not be misleading.

4.89. When referring to a Building Regulation requirement, Scheme B certificates includes wording, "this system can contribute to satisfying this requirement". The certificate could not include a definitive statement here because products/systems cannot comply with the Building Regulations in isolation. In contrast, the Scheme F certificate takes a clearer, although still non-definitive, approach, "…*the doorsets would be expected to meet the relevant requirements for BS 9999 for FD30 doorsets .... we cannot opine on whether it would be accepted by Building Control Authorities or any* *third parties for any purpose."* Based on these certificates the statements on Building Regulation compliance have limited benefit because they cannot be definitive and so could risk confusion.

4.90. Other opinions and design guidance contained within the Schemes A and B certificates are written non-definitively but because they are explained they are clear. For example, in Scheme A certificate in a section on Thermal performance "*The System can assist in reducing the U-value of external walls…. The U-value … will depend on the insulation thickness, fixing method, type of mechanical fixing and insulating value of the supporting wall and its internal finish".*

4.91. Recommendations in industry reports advise against including overly technical language in certification. However, because of the nature of testing and certification, some technical language is necessary. A conflict between the information requirements of different users of the certificates therefore exists. This is because the scheme's customers are manufacturers who understand technical language, but end users of the certificates include specifiers, who may have varied levels of technical knowledge, and residents, who are likely to find it difficult to understand the technical language used in certificates. PRP's experience as a specifier suggests that scheme certificates containing narrative, the professional opinion of the CAB and design guidance written clearly can aid understanding of what the scheme does, and does not, certify.

Testing

4.92. Specifiers need to know which standards a product has been tested to and, when relevant, the results of the testing. The scheme certificates contain a range of detail on testing the product has undergone.

4.93. Most of the schemes detail the tests the product or product/system components have undergone in order to achieve the certification. However, this information is presented in different ways. One clear example is the Scheme A certificate which includes tables documenting test standards and the test result. Scheme B includes test details throughout the certificate in the applicable technical section of the report. Some schemes such as Scheme D list the test standards with no commentary.

4.94. The Scheme I certificate includes no information on any testing which has been carried out however the scheme rules reveal that all the component parts must be CE or UKCA marked (where relevant).

4.95. None of the schemes append test reports to the certificate; arguably this would be the most transparent method of including testing information. Although Schemes F and G include test results and associated test report numbers.

4.96. A table listing testing that has been carried out is included within the Scheme A certificate. Tables of test results are presented under the heading 'Independently Assessed System Characteristics'. The characteristics include moisture control, strength, fire performance and thermal performance. The test standard is quoted along with the result of the test. Consolidating the information in a table brings clarity. In comparison, the Scheme B certificate includes details of the testing carried out throughout the main body of the certificate. A bibliography is included listing British and European Standards and other pieces of industry guidance.

4.97. Schemes C, D and E cite the name of the standard to which the product has been tested but with no further information. Scheme I certificates contain no information on testing.

4.98. Testing is included within ISO/IEC 17067:2013 as one of several 'Determination of Characteristics' activities for third-party certification schemes, which include:

- testing;
- inspection;
- design appraisal;
- assessment of services or processes;
- other determination activities, e.g. verification.

4.99. The standard goes on to explain that various determination activities have no specific name or designation. An example is the design appraisal.

4.100. Many of the scheme certificates do not include a clear statement outlining the scheme 'Determination of Characteristics activities'. On request, some schemes issued information such as a document outlining the scheme rules, others did not respond to the request, and one declined to provide information, stating that information was not public. This analysis is, of necessity, limited where full scheme information is not available.

4.101. ISO/IEC 17065, clause 4.6 states that *"The certification body shall maintain (through publications, electronic media or other means), and make available upon request, the following: a) information about (or reference to) the certification scheme(s), including evaluation procedures, rules and procedures for granting, for maintaining, for extending or reducing the scope of, for suspending, for withdrawing or for refusing certification."*

4.102. Schemes A, B and F include an outline description of their determination activities within the certificate, with varying clarity. Schemes C, D, E, J, G, and K publish either scheme rules or include a guide to the scheme online. Scheme I rules were available on request.

4.103. From a specifiers perspective, it is essential to present test results and the tests the product has been held to in a clear, unambiguous way. Overall, many of the schemes do not follow the guidance in ISO/IEC 17065 on making information available either through publication or being available on request.

Transparency and access to information Through the Web

4.104. This section presents a qualitative assessment of the transparency and accessibility of third-party certification schemes through their websites. An experienced data analyst, not specialising in building product certification, was asked to evaluate the ease with which a manufacturer could determine whether their product falls under an existing certification scheme and how readily a user or installer could verify the certification status of a product or company.

4.105. The analysis was conducted by navigating the websites of the case study certification schemes, assessing the availability of searchable databases, the clarity of certification information, and the accessibility of contact details for further inquiries. While this approach is qualitative, the findings support the contention that certification schemes vary significantly in their openness and transparency.

Availability and accessibility of certification Databases

4.106. Certification schemes were found to differ in their approach to providing public access to certification data. Some schemes provide searchable and well-structured certification databases, allowing users to filter results by product category, company name, or certification number, such as Schemes H, F, and G. Others, such as A, B and C and D, require additional steps, such as account registration, or rely on external search engines to locate certification records. A number of schemes, including E and I, provide no public database at all, making it difficult for users to verify certification status.

4.107. In several cases, websites contained partially functional or incomplete certification databases, reducing their effectiveness as transparency tools.

Ease of use and navigation

4.108. A key issue identified was the inconsistent terminology and structure used across different websites, making it difficult for manufacturers or product users to compare certification schemes effectively.

Downloading of certification datasets

4.109. The analysis explored whether it was possible to download a dataset containing all the third-party scheme data; reflecting the Hackitt Report’s recommendations regarding increased clarity and transparency and the use of non-technical language.

4.110. Few of the case study schemes allow users to download structured datasets for offline analysis. Scheme H enables efficient data extraction, allowing certification data to be copied and pasted into a spreadsheet with minimal processing. Schemes F and G provide structured filtering but make bulk data extraction difficult. Schemes B and D allow limited extraction but require significant manual effort to compile a complete dataset. Schemes G and J contain useful certification data, but their design prioritises presentation over structured data access, making downloads impractical.

Clarity of certification criteria and scope

4.111. There is no standardisation in how certification schemes present their scope, criteria, and process requirements. Only a few schemes, such as G and F, provide detailed certification criteria, outlining the process, testing requirements, and scope of validity. Many schemes, such as A and D, provide high-level descriptions but lack specific details on certification assessment methods. Several websites act primarily as marketing platforms, offering minimal transparency on what certification entails.

4.112. The absence of clear, publicly accessible certification criteria likely makes it challenging for manufacturers to determine whether their product is eligible for certification under a particular scheme. It is also challenging for specifiers to know what a scheme comprises of and how rigorous it is.

Contact information and support availability

4.113. All certification schemes provide some form of contact details, but the level of support varied. B and G offer multiple communication channels, including phone numbers, email, and online contact forms. F and H provide structured enquiry forms but limited guidance on certification queries. Some schemes, such as E and I, offer only basic contact forms with no direct point of contact for certification inquiries.

4.114. A key issue identified was that many certification bodies encourage potential applicants to contact them directly, rather than providing detailed guidance online, adding unnecessary steps for manufacturers seeking clarity on requirements.

Balance Between transparency and marketing

4.115. Clearly, all schemes use their websites to help to promote their services and provide a public face to the market. A data analyst was asked to consider their assessment of the balance between transparent access to data and the marketing of their services. While accepting that this is a subjective judgement, it is considered a valid perspective helping to understand how the schemes engage with the market.

4.116. A significant finding from the study is that some certification schemes seem to prioritise marketing over transparency. Schemes A, D, and J have websites that are professionally designed but primarily serve as promotional platforms rather than providing straightforward access to certification data.

4.117. Scheme K and C rely on modern but functionally inefficient website designs in terms of data access, making certification information harder to locate. Although not operational at the time of writing, Scheme K planned to host a digital platform with open access to certification and product data linked to QR codes on product labels.

4.118. The analysis shows that highly functional websites such as H and F strike a better balance between transparency and marketing, ensuring that certification data is accessible while maintaining a professional corporate presence.

Conclusions of the qualitative web analysis

4.119. The qualitative analysis demonstrates that transparency and accessibility across certification schemes is highly inconsistent. Some certification schemes offer structured, easily accessible databases, while others provide limited or no public access to certification records.

4.120. The usability and structure of websites varies, with some prioritising marketing and corporate branding over transparency and functionality.

4.121. The ability to download and extract certification data is rare, with most certification bodies offering view-only search tools with no bulk data access.

4.122. Manufacturers and users face challenges in understanding certification criteria, as many schemes provide only high-level descriptions rather than detailed eligibility requirements. The availability of contact details is mixed, with some schemes offering direct and structured communication options, while others require significant effort to obtain assistance.

4.123. While this is a qualitative study, the findings suggest that greater standardisation in how certification schemes present their data and processes would improve transparency for manufacturers, specifiers, and end-users. The variability observed highlights the need for a more consistent, structured approach to publicly available certification data.

Use of ISO/IEC and other standards

4.124. This section provides an overview of international standards that underpin third-party certification schemes. It explores how ISO/IEC 17065, ISO/IEC 17067, and ISO/IEC 17025 are applied within the UK context. The section also includes a mapping of AVCP levels to corresponding standards and certification schemes.

4.125. UKAS carries out activities to accredit CABs using some of these international standards. It is not within the scope of this study to examine UKAS. The aim is to understand which schemes use these standards.

Overview of standards frameworks and accreditation

4.126. UK conformity assessment schemes for construction products are built on international ISO/IEC frameworks that cover product certification bodies (ISO/IEC 17065), testing laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025), and scheme design (ISO/IEC 17067). These standards underpin schemes operated by CABs in the sector.

4.127. UKAS is the national accreditation body for the UK, operating under a Memorandum of Understanding with the government and recognised under Regulation (EC) No. 765/2008, retained in UK law after the UK’s departure from the EU. UKAS accredits product certification bodies against ISO/IEC 17065 and testing laboratories under ISO/IEC 17025. While ISO/IEC 17067 is not mandatory for accreditation, it provides internationally accepted guidance for the design and structure of certification schemes.

ISO/IEC standards in certification scheme operation

4.128. UKAS accredited CABs must meet ISO/IEC 17065 'Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services'. Clause 3.9 requires a defined and consistently applied certification scheme. All the schemes are operated by UKAS accredited CABs.

4.129. ISO/IEC 17067:2013 'Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes', provides commonly referenced guidelines for conformity assessment scheme design. A 'Type 5' scheme is defined in the standard and is commonly followed for product certification schemes. It is the most comprehensive of the five types. As another method of analysis, we will compare the case study schemes to a type 5 scheme. In Table 4.10 the requirements of a Type 5 scheme have been compared to the case study schemes.

Table 4.10 Comparison of schemes against ISO/IEC 17067 Type 5 requirements

Third-Party Certification Scheme (A-K)	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**
1 Selection	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2 Determination of characteristics											
a)Testing, or b) inspection	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	Y
c) Design appraisal	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	?	Y	Y	N
d) Assessment of services or processes	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	Y
e) Other determination activities	?	?	?	N	N	?	?	?	Y	Y	?
3 Review	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4 Decision on certification	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5 Attestation, licensing											
a) Issuing a statement of conformity and b) granting rights to use these	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
d) Licensing marks	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6 Surveillance											
a) Testing or inspection of open market samples	N	N	?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
b) Testing or inspection of factory samples	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
c) Assessment of production, the delivery of the service or the operation of the process	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
d) Management system audits and random tests/inspections	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y

Key

Y = Yes

N = No

? = Unclear

Sources

1) ISO/IEC 17067:2013, Table 1

2) ADROIT desktop research into the case study schemes and interviews with schemes.

4.130. Table 4.10 compares the 'Conformity Assessment Activities' of a Type 5 scheme defined in ISO/IEC 17067:2013 against analysis of the case study schemes. Activities fall under main headings: 'Selection', 'Determination of Characteristics', 'Review', 'Decision on Certification', 'Attestation and Licensing', and 'Surveillance'. There are further sub-headings for: 'Determination of Characteristics', 'Attestation, licensing' and 'Surveillance'. ISO/ISE 17000:2015 provides definitions of many of these activities.

4.131. It is very difficult to understand how each scheme meets Type 5 requirements. This is because the schemes use different descriptions and definitions of their activities and these do not necessarily match ISO/IEC terminology precisely. For example, Scheme B describes what could fall under the 'Determination of Characteristics' activities as "assessment of tests and investigations". Similar issues with definitions were experienced across all schemes and judgement is needed to interpret information drawn from certificates, scheme rules (where available) and is also informed by discussions with some schemes. Because of a lack of clear information on the processes followed by each scheme it is not possible to provide a definitive comparison in all cases.

4.132. The schemes differ in their 'Determination of Characteristics' and 'Surveillance' activities.

4.133. Within 'Determining the Characteristics' of a product, there are four sub-categories and Type 5 schemes can carry out one or more of these;

- 'Testing or Inspection' activities, and all the schemes carry out one or both;
- 'Design Appraisals', six of the schemes carry out these;
- 'Assessment of Processes', all schemes carry out these;
- 'Other activities', are carried out by two schemes.

4.134. All schemes carry out Surveillance activities, (except for scheme I which requires annual renewal of the certification). ISO/IEC 17067 notes in section 5.3.7 that Type 5 schemes have some flexibility in which surveillance activities they choose. Schemes can take market, or factory samples, and they can choose whether to assess the process or carry out management system audits with random inspections/tests. For Surveillance activities:

- ‘Testing or inspection of open market samples’ or ‘testing or inspection of factory samples’, was carried out by seven schemes;

- ‘Assessing the production, delivery operation of the process’, and ‘management system audits and random tests or inspections’. All schemes carry out these activities.

4.135. Based on the analysis, there is sufficient evidence combined with an element of judgement to conclude that Schemes C, D, E, F, G, H and K meet the guidance for a Type 5 scheme. It should not be inferred that the other schemes do not meet the guidance for a Type 5 scheme; rather that information to make the analysis was not available.

Process to follow AVCP 1+

4.136. The Morrell-Day Review recommends that the conformity assessment process for voluntary third-party certification should follow all the requirements of the highest level of assessment and verification of conformity that exists for regulated products under the UK-CPR (AVCP Level 1+). AVCP Level 1+ comprises of Factory Production Control (FPC), further testing of samples taken at manufacturing plants, assessment of performance of the product, initial inspection of the factory, continuous surveillance and audit testing of samples. See Annex B of this report for details.

4.137. This section analyses the case study schemes against the AVCP 1+ system level requirements. Because of the lack of clear information on the processes followed by each scheme it is not possible to provide a definitive comparison. Table 4.11 includes a cross-sectional analysis of the case study schemes against the AVCP1+ requirements based on the available information. It includes whether the schemes require FPC, further testing of factory samples, testing and assessment, initial inspection, surveillance of FPC and sampling.

Table 4.11 Comparison of the schemes against the AVCP 1+ requirements

Voluntary third-party certification scheme (A-K)	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
FPC	Y	Y*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y*	Y
Further testing of samples taken at the factory	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	N	N	Y
Testing, assessment:	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y **	Y
Production - Initial Inspection	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Production - surveillance of FPC	Y	Y*	Y	Y ***	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y*, ***	Y
Production - sampling	N	N	****	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	N	N	Y

Table Notes
*Not called an FPC but same or similar contents
**Plus, additional risk management activities
***Plus, manufacturer must demonstrate continuous improvement of quality
****In some cases, depending on the construction product
Source: Adroit desktop research

Factory Production Control

4.138. The UK-CPR define FPC as the documented permanent and internal control of production in a factory, in accordance with the relevant harmonised technical specification. There is no relevant harmonised technical specification for voluntary schemes so this will be taken to mean with the specified requirements. All the schemes except two require the manufacturer to produce an FPC plan. The two exceptions do not call it FPC but do require other processes which match the description or are like FPC. Therefore overall, it is considered that all the case study schemes require FPC.

Testing, assessment

4.139. All the schemes carry out assessment activities.

Production - Initial Inspection

4.140. The initial inspection is an onsite audit by the notified body to ISO 19011 which provides guidelines on management and quality systems, for example to confirm the manufacturer has a Factory Production Control system which includes a continuous monitoring/verification process that will ensure the products continue to meet the requirements. All schemes carry out an initial inspection.

Production - surveillance

4.141. This requires continuing surveillance to verify the manufacturer continues to operate an FPC system. All schemes conduct surveillance activities except for Scheme I because the certification is only valid for a year.

4.142. All schemes carry out surveillance except one. All the surveillance involves verifying an operational FPC system. In two cases it is not certain this includes verifying the FPC.

4.143. In addition, Schemes D and J have a process that requires the manufacturer to demonstrate continuous improvement against a benchmark. This is above what is required in AVCP system 1+.

Production - sampling

4.144. This requires periodic audit testing of samples, with samples selected by the CAB at the manufacturer's production or storage facility. Schemes D, G, F and E carry out periodic audit sampling. Scheme C may do, depending on the product. The other schemes do not. However, Schemes A and B carry out an assessment of several technical requirements which require multiple types of testing.

Conclusion

4.145. Overall, several of the case study schemes follow the steps of the AVCP 1+ system process. Where schemes do not, generally periodic audit testing of samples is missing. This could be because it is impractical to do so, for example because of the construction product type, or due to the extent of testing required against several different requirements. Some schemes have developed alternative audit activities which might pick up or prevent product changes such as continuous improvement requirements and risk reduction activities.

4.146. This analysis has revealed a lack of transparency because most of the schemes do not publish clear information on requirements.

Access to information on CABs and standards

4.147. UKAS maintains a publicly accessible directory of all CABs accredited for construction product certification, available via its website. Each CAB's scope of accreditation, including references to applicable product standards, is published as a separate multi-page Portable Document Format (PDF) file. As a result, it is hard to search and compile a full picture of which CABs can undertake work on a particular standard. Extensive manual effort to extract and interpret data from PDFs is required. However, it is understood that UKAS is in the process of developing fully digitalised schedules of accreditation that from early 2026 will facilitate access to and searching of schedule data.

Cost range assessment

4.148. This section of the analysis looks at the costs of schemes and provides a:

- high-level overview of certification scheme costs;
- qualitative assessment of stakeholder insights on cost implications.

4.149. Information of the costs of accreditation by schemes is not readily available from public sources. None of the case study schemes publish costing information.

4.150. Each of the schemes interviewed was asked as part of the stakeholder discussions to provide a high-level overview of the scheme costs. Many declined to provide information. The information that was provided has been anonymised and is summarised in this section.

4.151. To provide a range of potential costs and an understanding of how costs are calculated, we summarised the information provided by schemes into three ranges using the terms used by schemes to describe typical costs (VAT would be charged in addition to the costs described).

Costs described by schemes as at the 'lower end' of the range – under £20,000

4.152. The lowest ranges quoted were costs of £3,314 for a small company with one manufacturing site, to a large company with two manufacturing sites £6,800 on an annual basis. This is in addition to testing costs (likely to be a 'one off' cost).

4.153. Another scheme said that the average cost to be certified for three years is approximately £20,000 (equivalent to £6,700 on an annualised basis).

4.154. A large scheme indicated that at the lower end, costs of £2,000 to £5,000 for a simple product certification were typical and in line with industry norms.

4.155. Certification costs vary with complexity. Initial certification typically ranges from £5,000–£10,000 in year one, with annual fees of £2,000–£5,000 for ongoing surveillance. Testing is a separate cost (e.g. ~£10,000 for a single door test). Audit and test costs can increase based on complexity and the need for multiple product variations/configurations.

Costs described by schemes as 'mid-range' – £20,000 to £100,000

4.156. A large scheme described the mid-range as "potentially tens of thousands of pounds".

4.157. Another scheme involved in fire testing indicated that initial certification for a product costs from £30,000. Annual verification costs are from around £3,000. Cost saving efficiencies can be achieved if there are several products being manufactured in a single facility, in which case multiple products can be covered by the scheme in the same certification visits.

4.158. Another scheme indicated that the vast majority of its work is closer to £30,000 than £100,000. For example, a common mid-range cost is £40,000 for an external wall insulation system.

Costs described by schemes as at the 'top end' - £100,000 and above

4.159. One scheme indicated that for highly complex or particularly innovative products or systems it can be up to £250,000.

4.160. Another scheme gave the example of certification for a large modular system which can be up to £100,000, reflecting the complexity of the system.

4.161. Innovative products and new entrants to the market with new product approaches were also cited as being at the top end of costs. For example, a venture backed company with a new system took "several years and hundreds of thousands" to achieve certification as the product developed and changed over time.

How and why costs vary

4.162. In the stakeholder interviews each of the schemes was asked how their scheme charges are calculated and their responses are summarised in this section.

4.163. The cost varies significantly depending on the scope of the certification, the number of product variations, product complexity and testing needs. Cost varies dramatically between, for example, a paint product and a complex structural system.

4.164. Costs also depend on what the manufacturer chooses to certify – limiting the certification to a narrow range of essential characteristics for very specific applications can keep costs down.

4.165. Another CAB declined to provide costing information but calculates a price for each customer following the guidelines in IAF (International Accreditation Forum) Mandatory Document 5: 2019 Determination of Audit Time of Quality, Environmental, and Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems. The CAB calculates costing based on the number of staff a manufacturer has for factory inspections and the number of active construction sites. The calculation provides a time estimate for the inspections on which to base the fee. In general, schemes indicated that their pricing is generally based on a time costing model. This is often related to the complexity of the product, the number of sites required to be visited and the size of the team needed to undertake the work.

4.166. Schemes were also asked if they provide a standard set of guide prices or published tariff. None of them do. When asked why a standard price list was not possible, they indicated that the wide variety of construction products and, for example, the different performance and assessment requirements means that each product assessed needs to be approached individually.

5. Stakeholder analysis

5.1. This section includes anonymised feedback from nine interviews with the CABs who run the third-party certification case study schemes. All eleven case study schemes were invited to participate in the interviews and nine interviews were conducted in the first half of 2025. A standard set of discussion topics was used for the interviews (see Annex A) but note that not all topics were relevant to all the interviewees.

5.2. This chapter summarises views expressed by CABs during interviews. These views are reported as stakeholder perceptions and opinions at the time of interview and are not independently verified as part of this study. They are presented to describe the range of perspectives expressed and to provide context. The analysis does not verify, reconcile, or validate individual statements.

Scheme A views

Scheme A Standards Covered & Use of ISO/IEC Standards

5.3. Each product is analysed by technical managers against regulations to understand which standards will be used to assess if it is fit for a particular purpose. Because of innovation in the industry, one minor change in a product can require an additional standard against which the product must be assessed.

Scheme A Ongoing Oversight & Randomised Testing

5.4. Manufacturing facilities audited annually. No random testing.

Scheme A Installation Requirements

5.5. During the technical assessment, technical managers will review the manufacturer's installation documents. The audit team carry out a site assessment visit to see the product in a building and assess the installation against the installation guide. For large systems this process is carried out annually.

5.6. For new products which Scheme A work with manufacturers during their research and development phase, there may not initially be an example of a product integrated into a building. In this case the assessment of the installation guide will be carried out against a mock up.

5.7. Installation guidelines are integrated into the certificate.

5.8. For certain products, Scheme A requires the use of an approved installer scheme where it considers there to be a heightened installation risk. At the time of interview, Scheme A identified cavity wall insulation as a key risk area, citing concerns about installation quality and the potential for installer-related non-conformities, noting that work on this issue was ongoing across the sector. In this area, Scheme A requires manufacturers' installers to be registered under the scheme's approved installer arrangements. This requirement is set out in the product certificate and forms part of the scheme rules.

Scheme A Technical Language & Accessibility

5.9. Scheme A said that the certificate is targeted at stakeholders in the construction industry. There is a certain level of knowledge needed to understand the contents because the certificates cover several technical areas in detail. In each area, the certificate includes technical information along with references to look up further details if relevant to the specific building project. If the certificate was aimed at the general public, it would need to look quite different as attempting to set out technical information in summarised form would not work. There is clarity in the document for technical people to understand.

Scheme A Process for Drafting & Finalising Certificates

5.10. Technical project managers will draft the initial text. A second team will review this draft to double check the standards and technical information and check it against the scheme's style guide. The scheme style guide provides information on certain words and phrases which cannot be used along with other guidance to ensure the outputs are in a consistent style.

5.11. A first draft will be issued to the client for their review. The client may request changes. For example, clients might want to say it can be used in a wider variety of building types than included in the initial draft text. In this situation, there is a need for further discussion as to the extent of the claims made about the product which are supported by the certificate, often Scheme A will reject the client proposed amendments.

Challenges for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) Customers

5.12. 70% of scheme A customers are SMEs. Scheme A identified challenges for SMEs producing, say, a single product such as an expanded polystyrene insulation product because their margins are much tighter when they have to make back the cost of a £30,000 certification. They have to sell a lot of insulation to cover that cost. In comparison, a large manufacturer producing External Wall Insulation systems may be looking at much bigger projects; for example £2 million on an individual cladding project; so it is relatively easier to make the certification cost back.

5.13. With larger manufacturers there are complex chains of management structure in signing off and agreeing the certification. For smaller manufacturers the scheme is likely dealing directly with the manager and the technical director.

5.14. A typical customer would be a company size of 40 people; this is probably the average size of a customer. The smallest is probably 5-6 people, for example making brick arches. Larger manufacturers invest more time and money in innovations. Smaller companies stick to certifying products to the current standards.

Wider Reflections, Industry Trends & Developments

5.15. Increased demand from customers to demonstrate quality and trust in their products and processes. This is driven by reputation and business needs but also because manufacturers want to have reassurance that their products are safe, so they can 'sleep at night'.

5.16. Seeing an increasing demand for non-mandatory installation schemes. There are good actors and people who care about quality in the industry, and it is a way to further improve quality. Reputational risk if there are issues because of poor installation.

5.17. Scheme A explains manufacturers are using innovation to outcompete their competitors. For example, jumping slightly out of the traditional ways of doing things, say hemp insulation or wood fibre insulation. This changes everything away from one set of standards and you have to look at it in a different way. You are effectively creating a new product standard. Then all parties in the industry would have to agree to it under consultation which scheme A believes can take years under all the committees.

5.18. Scheme A feels like there is a general uncertainty in the industry in the wake of recent reports and how much change is coming in.

Scheme B views

Scheme B Certification Scope and Scheme Operations

5.19. The organisation provides several schemes, including product and installer certification under ISO/IEC 17065 and 17020. Products certified include paints, insulation, structural systems and building facades. Their approach separates certification and testing services, with certification decisions made independently. Testing data is accepted from UKAS-accredited laboratories and equivalent bodies internationally. In some cases, they accept test data from non-accredited sources, subject to a structured technical review.

Scheme B Manufacturer Requirements and Surveillance

5.20. Manufacturers must submit a quality plan detailing control measures and staffing. Certification is contingent on agreement to disclose changes to production, design or test results. The certification is supported by two annual audits and a full certificate review every three years.

Scheme B Installation and Maintenance

5.21. Certified or approved installers are required for certain product categories, where installer schemes are available. Most product schemes do not have an associated installer scheme. Maintenance is outside the certification scope.

Scheme B Certification Documents and Use

5.22. Scheme B certificates can be lengthy, incorporating all relevant detail in a single document. There is concern that specifiers and clients often misinterpret or fail to fully read the certificates. The organisation has responded by expanding Continuing Professional Development training for industry stakeholders to improve understanding.

Scheme B Costs and SME Challenges

5.23. Certification costs vary from a few thousand pounds for simple products to over £250,000 for complex systems. Early-stage SMEs often face challenges related to the cost and complexity of certification.

Wider Reflections

5.24. The organisation noted an increase in certification demand, particularly in the past five years. They expressed concern over sudden changes in regulatory requirements (e.g. withdrawal of certain fire test standards) without adequate industry notice.

5.25. Scheme B stated anecdotally that certification bodies are not always informed of test failures due to confidentiality agreements between manufacturers and test labs. The authors of this report have no evidence to support or oppose this statement. However, we note the criticisms of some manufacturers manipulating the testing process contained in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report (see Part 3 of the executive summary).

5.26. The CAB supported the direction of recent policy consultation documents and advocated for earlier engagement between regulators and certification bodies. Also expressed support for efforts to develop a more structured and transparent framework for third-party certification, potentially with stronger recognition in regulation.

Scheme C views

Scheme C Challenges in Accreditation & Industry Oversight

5.27. The CAB maintains a wide range of testing and certification capability because they say manufacturers look for CABs who have the full portfolio of capability. For example, they may only certify one product in a category over a three-year period but they maintain accreditation (even though they can't fully cover the accreditation cost). They do this to ensure they have a full suite of accreditation to offer to large customers and see this as a competitive advantage in the market.

Market Shifts & Customer Expectations

5.28. When the UK left the European Union, the CAB mirrored their UK activity into other European offices.

5.29. In the UK, the CAB has approximately ten companies for whom they certify construction products. They are all large manufacturers.

Scheme C Structure

5.30. The CAB operates two third-party certification schemes in the UK. The schemes follow the structure of typical Type 5 product certification schemes as defined in ISO IEC 17067. The CAB noted that UKAS reviews organisational competency during the accreditation process for the CAB.

5.31. The CAB provided an example of how their process works for a rainscreen cladding system where the CAB receives an enquiry from a manufacturer. They will:

- analyse the component parts of the system;
- identify all the key technical aspects of the system and go through a construction review process;
- review technical documentation and consider what type of test programme will be needed.

5.32. Testing will either be carried out by the CAB, independently in a particular laboratory that has specific expertise, or by reviewing existing testing reports. The CAB often observes the testing first hand which forms part of the evaluation.

5.33. Once testing is complete, an assessor decides whether the product should be certified. This decision is reviewed independently in order to validate or reject the decision. Every assessor who conducts an evaluation is skilled in that product area. It is possible for assessors to cover other product areas once they have fulfilled the internal training and qualification requirements.

5.34. The schemes also carry out factory inspections and have requirements for ongoing oversight and surveillance of product manufacturing.

Scheme C Standards Covered & Use of ISO/IEC Standards

5.35. Schemes are set up to enable products to be sold in various markets including the US market and US or other international standards are used.

5.36. Depending on the product, relevant standards would be selected and an assessment made against those standards. If there is any additional guidance or industry mandates then these could be considered as well.

5.37. Scheme C said that the UK lacks a formal forum for the approved bodies to get together. Equivalent forums in Europe exist. In the forums, the conformity assessment bodies as a whole would review a standard. Maybe there is an area that is grey or unknown. And between those CABs, they would reach an agreement. For example, how the standard should be applied, or how a specific requirement should be applied. Subsequently the agreement would be formalised and documented with the expectation, that all notified bodies follow that particular interpretation to ensure consistency.

Scheme C Publishing of Certification Data

5.38. Scheme C hosts an online searchable database. Users are required to register their details before being able to access the database.

Wider Reflections

5.39. Manufacturers can present test data from European test houses. In some instances, the CAB rejects the data because it has not been clear exactly what was tested or there is not enough detail to demonstrate the product meets the requirements. This CAB often does not accept data on this basis and based on discussions within the industry they believe this approach is common across UK CABs.

5.40. Scheme C believes that national accreditation bodies in some European countries do not offer such a thorough service as UKAS. If the UK wants to stay strong it has to be allowed to manage itself. The UK must be in control of the products which are coming into the market.

Scheme D views

Scheme D Manufacturing requirements

5.41. The scheme requires that manufacturers agree to a process of continual improvement. Manufacturers have to justify and make sure they have a continual improvement process in place and these are assessed and audited by the scheme.

Scheme D Relationships with other CABs who provide test data

5.42. There are a few labs/people they accept test data from who Scheme D considers have the competences to test to the necessary standards. They gave the example of a master lock maker who is one of the best in the UK. While his activity is not UKAS accredited, the CAB has a process for recognising his skills and competences as part of its certification process. This approach is fully documented and subject to UKAS assessment.

Scheme D Customers

5.43. The scheme is designed as a Business to Business service for manufacturers. They said that they provide an indirect service to specifiers and homeowners. There is possibly more to do in making these schemes visible to homeowners, for example, and distinguishing between the CE mark (which is largely designed as a means of cross border trade rather than a measure of product performance) and the products certified by the scheme.

Wider Reflections

5.44. The scheme believes a central searchable database of CABs, including the ability to search for partner test laboratories (for example) would be a very useful for all the industry to help to increase collaboration between schemes and testing facilities and enable sub-contracting. They argued it would increase the resilience of UK infrastructure.

5.45. Dangers of increasing opacity and complexity. The CAB agrees with the various reports that criticise the opacity and complexity of the current UK approach (they cite Morrell & Day) but the dangers of making everything opaquer and complex are real. They identified the need for better definition of roles and improved coordination between government departments, the Office for Product Safety and Standards, the Building Safety Regulator and UKAS.

5.46. The CAB's view is that MHCLG should be issuing competence standards (they said the EU have written this into the new EU-CPR). The CAB believes it is very important to draw the difference between the accreditation process for CABs (which is UKAS' role) and subject matter expertise that enables products to be certified. This expertise can be in the schemes themselves and also be provided by testing labs and manufacturers who are genuinely working hard to produce safe and innovative products where markets are perhaps moving faster than standards are being developed.

Scheme F views

Scheme F Operations:

5.47. Its CAB is accredited under ISO/IEC 17065. The CAB carries out conformity assessment activities against 40 technical schedules. The scheme explains that the technical schedules are publicly available and developed with input from sector representatives and an impartiality committee. However, the authors of this report were unable to locate these online, see section on Transparency and Access to Information for more details. Certified manufacturers and their certification scopes are listed online, including any suspensions. Certification documents include a public summary, a technical data sheet, and a confidential construction specification for manufacturers. Efforts are underway to improve clarity through alignment with plain language initiatives.

Scheme F Costs:

5.48. Certification costs vary with complexity. Initial certification typically ranges from £5,000–£10,000 in year one, with annual fees of £2,000–£5,000 for ongoing surveillance. Testing is a separate cost (e.g. ~£10,000 for a single door test). Audit and test costs can increase based on complexity and the need for multiple configurations.

Scheme F Manufacturing Requirements:

5.49. Certification includes scoping, sampling from factories, testing (in-house or external), and FPC audits. Annual FPC audits are required, with increased frequency possible if the manufacturer is not certified to ISO 9001 (Quality Management Systems – Requirements), or if issues arise. Certification is reviewed and revalidated every 3–5 years. Key components (e.g. door cores or hardware) must also be certified or audited.

Scheme F Installation and Maintenance:

5.50. Installation and maintenance are not part of the product certification. However, separate installation schemes exist under ISO 17065 service provision rules. Certificates include installation guidance based on standards (e.g. BS 8214) and manufacturer instructions. These are recognised as critical areas where failures often occur.

Scheme F Use of Test Data:

5.51. The scheme accepts test data from external labs if they are ISO 17025 accredited and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation signatories. Labs should also participate in harmonisation bodies such as the European Group of Organisations for Fire Testing Inspection and Certification (EGOLF), or the European Organisation for Technical Assessment (EOTA). All third-party data is subject to internal technical review before use.

Scheme F Governance and Separation

5.52. Certification, testing, and installer schemes are managed separately within the organisation to ensure independence. Scheme changes and suspensions are reviewed by an impartiality committee with wide sector representation. The structure supports objectivity and transparency.

Scheme F Customers:

5.53. Overall, the customer base is 50% UK and 50% international, though this varies by product (e.g. UK-dominated for doors; internationally dominated for hardware and glass). Many SME manufacturers participate in the scheme, particularly in the UK fire door market. These SMEs are typically familiar with ISO 9001 and FSC requirements and often operate similar systems.

Scheme F Approach to SMEs:

5.54. SMEs are not treated differently in certification but may engage with system house models to access testing data and achieve certification more cost-effectively. SMEs are active participants in trade associations and standards development and generally view certification as essential. The primary concern for SMEs is the potential cost burden of adapting to future changes in EU frameworks.

Wider Reflections

5.55. While the number of product scheme participants has remained steady, activity in installer schemes is growing. There is increasing engagement with certification and more frequent updates to existing certificates.

5.56. Scheme F made some specific points as part of their wider reflections. They expressed support for MHCLG's consultation approach and direction of travel as outlined in the Construction Products Reform Green Paper 2025 and suggested improvements to regulatory clarity and communication to prevent confusion between certification and compliance with Building Regulations.

5.57. Scheme F recommended that any minimum criteria for certification should be developed by BSI or similar impartial bodies, rather than solely by trade associations.

5.58. Finally, Scheme F expressed concern that UK reliance on EU-CPR for CE marking may limit UK influence and feedback into future EU developments.

Scheme H views

Scheme H Operations

5.59. The CAB has several voluntary third-party certification schemes in Europe which they had planned to introduce in the UK. They have found it difficult to find suitably qualified UK auditors.

Scheme H Products & Systems Covered

5.60. Third-party certification schemes for construction products include two main categories for cables and for fire detection as well as gas products.

5.61. The CAB's Third-party Certification schemes are structured as Type 5 schemes. In summary:

- the representative sample is chosen by the CAB and tested;
- the Factory Production Control systems is evaluated on the quality of the system and the product;
- ongoing surveillance is usually carried out twice a year. Inspections and the verification of the sample that manufacturers are producing depend on type of manufacturing and certification;
- the schemes include samples selected from both the market and directly from the production side.

5.62. If nonconformities are detected, this is fed back to the client. Certification can be suspended or cancelled depending on the problem, the product and the type of non-conformity, based on its severity.

Scheme H Online Availability of Certificates

5.63. The CAB maintains a database of certificates, including valid and suspended certificates. This database is publicly available.

Scheme H Certificate Dates & Expiration

5.64. In the past they did not include an expiry date on certificates because of the ongoing surveillance activities. But as standards were updated a validity date was added. Their European accreditation body (for the part of the company located in Europe) strongly suggests a maximum time limit for certification.

Scheme H Customer Base & UK/Overseas Split

5.65. Most of the customers are based in European markets.

5.66. Those customers that the CAB has in the UK that have decided to continue with the UKCA marking are large manufacturers who see UKCA marking requested by the end client. So, it is required from a business point of view, not a regulatory point of view.

Scheme H Future Directions

5.67. The CAB is renewing its UKAS accreditation because it believes if the UK decides to implement a local technical scheme for construction products with some mandatory requirements, they think it will be a great opportunity.

Wider Reflections

5.68. Following the UK’s departure from the EU and the introduction of UKCA marking, the CAB decided to build up a base in the UK, in order to apply to UKAS for accreditation. This would provide a route for their European customers to access the UK market. They have a wide experience in the third-party certification market in the EU.

5.69. Following the UK government deciding to continue the recognition of the CE mark, the CAB has halted its business in the UK which was predicated on offering the UKCA mark to their European customer base. This CAB has made significant investment in UK operations. In addition to the cost of the fees for UKAS accreditation a substantial investment was made in premises and quality management systems.

Scheme I views

Scheme I Staff Competence

5.70. All staff have a background working in the industry and are experts in their field. They discussed the specific technical challenges in the field and how their schemes work to address them. Raised the specific geographical challenges the UK presents and considered that construction products in their field must meet different, higher standards here than in other countries.

Scheme I Surveillance Activities

5.71. The scheme has no ongoing surveillance requirements because the certification is only valid for one year at which point further conformity assessment activities are carried out in order to issue the revised certification.

Scheme I Standards and Testing

5.72. The scheme includes extensive activities in assessment of the system and constituent materials, in the factory and on-site during installation. The scheme includes optional on-site installation certification where they assess the installers based on the assessor's experience working in the industry.

5.73. In addition to requiring component parts to meet certain standards, the CAB makes its own judgments and design decisions based on its in-house technical experience. For example, they know a certain fixing is required to work in UK conditions but this is not included in any standard. Also, contractor competence is assessed based not just qualifications but by observing site installation. They are particularly concerned about moisture ingress and use their own design judgement in assessing products as to whether the components used together are acceptable.

Scheme I Transparency

5.74. The certification documents contain no detail on the certification activities carried out. The CAB explain there is no specific reason for not including information in their certification except because the ISO standard does not require it.

Scheme I Modern Methods of Construction and Systems testing

5.75. Scheme I customers are manufacturers who combine raw materials and component products to manufacture structural systems. They carry out a review of all the components of the systems and whether they are compatible and meet requirements in certain standards. Even if a component is said to meet a standard, in some cases they will require a letter from a manufacturer who must confirm the product can be used in a particular context. They do not carry out surveillance activities of the component manufacturers. Because correct installation is key the scheme has an optional approved installer type scheme. They carry out a lot of site inspections throughout the year.

Wider Reflections

5.76. Scheme I recommends that test failures should be published.

5.77. The CAB doesn't believe there will be an expansion in their area of specialism. In the future they are looking to move into more international markets. They already operate in 17 countries and aim to expand into the USA.

5.78. Their business has grown over the last 30 years because of increasing requirements from warranty providers and others for test results and third-party certification. They also see continuing innovation and subsequent product changes as a source of growth.

Scheme J views

Scheme J Systems testing

5.79. The scheme was developed to certify off-site/MMC (Modern Methods of Construction) to give confidence to mortgage lenders that these types of construction are durable and safe. The scheme takes an approach of identifying potential hazards in processes and eliminating them using control measures. The full process including design, manufacturing and installation is reviewed and there are scheme requirements for each stage which consider safety, integrity and durability.

5.80. At design stage the proposed materials and components are reviewed following the principles of 'ISO 15686 Buildings and constructed assets Service Life Planning'. The component parts of a system are reviewed against a database including the lifespan of different materials. The durability of the system is then determined based on the components. At this stage the testing of different components to different standards is also reviewed. The CAB observed that because of the nature of off-site construction this is potentially a very large number of standards.

5.81. Scheme J explains one of the challenges faced in certification is balancing rigour with pragmatism; different organisations have different approaches and there are differences in products. So some flexibility is required to account for these differences while also ensuring safety and high standards. There also needs to be some flexibility in the system to allow product innovation.

Scheme J Surveillance

5.82. The scheme includes ongoing surveillance activities over the three-year certification period. Potentially six audits depending on a risk assessment of the customer.

Scheme J Customers

5.83. They have a range of customers from SMEs of ten people to larger companies of seven to eight hundred people.

Scheme J Transparency

5.84. Detailed scheme rules are published on the scheme's website. Certificates are issued but these are not made public. Forums are held every six months for manufacturers and banks to keep them updated on any changes in the scheme. They are continuously trying to update the scheme to make it the best it can be.

Scheme J Maintenance and Durability

5.85. Contractors are required to issue residents with information on maintenance requirements and dos and don'ts for their new homes.

5.86. The scheme includes a continuous improvement loop. Contractors are required to keep communication open with residents after completion so the residents can report defects. The contractor must record and resolve all the defects. The numbers of defects are noted over time. The contractor must demonstrate to the scheme a reduction in the number of defects reported to maintain certification.

Wider Reflections

5.87. Scheme J noted that high profile failures of some companies using Modern Methods of Construction have made the market wary of off-site construction. However, they argue that delivering sustainable homes at scale will see wider adoption of off-site construction over time.

Scheme K views

Scheme K Market Shifts & Customer Expectations

5.88. Scheme K explains that in their experience, manufacturers increasingly recognise the value of transparency in certification. There is strong interest in solutions that align with the "golden thread" principles and they see value in a digital platform for storing and accessing information.

5.89. The scheme has plans to expand their certification offer in future to a larger range of construction products. They will continue to develop their business to align with evolving regulatory and industry needs.

Scheme K Transparency

5.90. The new scheme's certification data will be available online with link via a QR code on a product label, allowing stakeholders to verify compliance details efficiently.

5.91. Scheme K explained that in the past, one of the major issues with testing is that test labs do not inform certification bodies when a product fails citing confidentiality agreements between test houses and manufacturers. To address this issue, the scheme has written into its terms and conditions that clients must grant permission for them to see and discuss any existing test results. Scheme K argues this allows for greater transparency.

5.92. The scheme also requires full disclosure of past test and audit results when a manufacturer transfers from another certification body. They say this prevents manufacturers from switching to a new certification provider to escape compliance issues.

Scheme K Variability in Testing & Certification Processes

5.93. Scheme K cite anecdotal incidents where manufacturers tested a product ten times before finally passing, without previous failures being made public. They explain this was not part of a research and development process for a product. However, they feel that this is changing and that the industry is becoming more transparent. Scheme K believes discrepancies exist in how different certification bodies interpret and apply testing requirements and that a more standardised approach could enhance consistency and market confidence.

Wider Reflections

5.94. The CAB has made significant financial investment designing new third-party Certification Schemes and is preparing to launch once their accreditation is received from UKAS. Their opinion is that delays in UKAS accreditation hinder market entry for new CABs.

5.95. In Scheme K's opinion, there is limited coordination among UK CABs, contributing to inconsistencies in certification practices. Scheme K believes the government should assess how accreditation processes can be streamlined. Greater standardisation in certification reporting would improve industry confidence.

6. Discussion

6.1. This section draws together the results from the cross-sectional analysis of third-party certification schemes, the case study comparison matrix, and the assessment of warranty provider requirements. It seeks to highlight key differences between schemes, discuss the implications of these differences for market actors, and explore how certification interacts with wider regulatory and performance assurance systems.

6.2. The analysis confirms substantial variation in how third-party schemes operate, both in the technical detail they provide and in the level of oversight and transparency. These differences shape how schemes are perceived and used across the construction products market. They also affect the extent to which certification schemes are likely to support safety, quality assurance, and informed decision-making.

6.3. Two frameworks, ISO/IEC standards and the building warranty provider requirements, have been particularly useful in understanding both the structural design of schemes and their potential alignment with stakeholder expectations. There are a range of different conformity assessment activities, surveillance activities and differences in how these activities are recorded in certification and made public. Some assess products against a wide range of technical requirements and related standards (such as fire safety, structural or moisture ingress) whereas others take a narrower approach, primarily focusing on testing or product conformity to a single standard without providing wider contextual information.

Comparing the schemes

6.4. The remainder of this discussion explores the differences between schemes across several assessment domains, drawing on the detailed findings in Section 5. Key themes include:

- scope of the schemes in their approaches;
- surveillance and oversight work, validity and expiry control;
- transparency of information;
- providing testing data and product assessments;
- installation and maintenance;
- regulatory compliance and Approved Documents;
- issues for specifiers, householders and other users;

6.5. These areas are discussed in turn.

Scope across key assessment areas

6.6. Some scheme certificates include statements on the scope of certification. The comprehensiveness of these statements varied. Some schemes include full system descriptions, context of use, and explicitly list excluded components (e.g. Schemes A and B). Others provide limited or no information on scope or rely on external documents which may not be accessible.

6.7. For many products (e.g. products in external wall systems), insufficient clarity on scope could lead to specifiers selecting inappropriate products. For example, if it was not clear which components were included in the certification.

6.8. The evidence shows that certification schemes vary significantly in the method with which they assess products.

6.9. This variation is seen in the breadth of technical assessment used. For example, some schemes (Schemes A and B) assess a wide range of product characteristics such as durability, thermal performance, fire safety, and structural integrity. Others focus more narrowly on compliance with a limited set of test standards. This likely reflects the variety and demands of the market for voluntary schemes.

6.10. Schemes also differ in the inclusion of non-test-based appraisals: some schemes offer design appraisal or judgement-based assessments such as compatibility and suitability in system applications. This type of information, while valuable, is not always attributed to a named individual or role, raising questions about transparency and accountability.

Surveillance and oversight, validity and expiry control

6.11. Schemes differ in how they ensure that certified products remain compliant over time. The analysis identified:

- annual surveillance, factory audits, and production quality system reviews in some schemes;
- a minority of schemes that do not publish information about surveillance frequency or methods;
- at least one scheme (I) that adopts a time-limited certification model, requiring full reassessment annually.

6.12. The lack of standardised surveillance processes and lack of transparency may create confusion for specifiers and make it difficult to assess the reliability of certification.

6.13. In terms of validity and expiry control, this is generally related to the level of oversight and surveillance visits. The surveillance model certification remains valid provided regular surveillance or factory inspections are maintained (e.g. B and F). Where schemes use fixed term expiry dates, reassessment is required for renewal (e.g. I).

6.14. Schemes that do not clearly communicate expiry or review periods may inadvertently undermine user confidence. Where expiry is not included, specifiers may need to rely on external databases to confirm validity, assuming such tools are available. There is no consistency in how this is handled by schemes.

Transparency of information

6.15. Transparency of information varies significantly between schemes. Key differences include:

- **availability of certification documents**: some schemes publish searchable databases; others do not provide public access to current or withdrawn certificates;
- **clarity of website information**: some websites are transparent, offering comprehensive information, some offer little information;
- **publication of surveillance and enforcement actions**: very few schemes publish information on revoked or suspended certifications, despite industry recommendations to do so.

6.16. As noted in Section 5, several schemes prioritise marketing presentation over transparency, which may affect how the schemes are perceived by specifiers and clients.

Providing testing data and product assessments

6.17. The provision of testing data across schemes is highly variable. Some schemes (e.g. Scheme A) provide detailed tables of test results, others cite a specific reference for a test report, while others (e.g. Scheme D) simply reference the standards tested against without describing test or outcomes.

6.18. None of the reviewed schemes publish full test reports or state in the certificate whether a product has undergone repeat or failed testing. This lack of visibility may reduce the ability of end users to scrutinise performance claims and may limit accountability.

Installation and maintenance

6.19. The importance of correct installation in product performance is well established, particularly in system-based components (e.g. fire doors, or External Wall Insulation systems). Yet:

- a minority of schemes provide detailed installation guidance;
- few schemes explicitly require approved installers or assess installer competence;
- maintenance instructions are rarely included, despite their relevance to performance over time.

6.20. Some stakeholders identified this as a critical area for improvement, noting that manufacturer-issued guides are not always sufficient or verified.

Regulatory compliance and approved Documents

6.21. Some case study scheme certificates include statements on a product being suitable for a particular purpose. For a specifier, an important part of deciding whether a product is suitable includes assessing the product against requirements in the Building Regulations. Several certificates include references to the Building Regulations or claim alignment with Approved Documents. However, these statements are typically non-definitive (e.g. “may contribute to compliance”) and are often difficult to interpret without context. They are non-definitive because full compliance of building works relies on many factors and not just the use of one product.

6.22. There is a risk that such statements could be misunderstood, particularly if not accompanied by a clear explanation of the limitations. This aligns with concerns raised in the Grenfell Tower Inquiry regarding the accuracy of certification language.

6.23. In an interview, Scheme A explained that statements of product suitability could be a point of contention with manufacturers. This is because manufacturers want to maximise the scope of the product’s uses under the certification, and the scheme owner must ensure that the statements in the certificate align with the testing information.

Issues for specifiers, householders and other users

6.24. For many users, third-party certification is a key source of product information. However:

- **a lack of transparency and clarity in certificate content:** can make it difficult to interpret claims or compare products;
- **the use of technical language:** while necessary in some cases, may not always be accessible to non-specialists;
- **unclear validity controls**: not all certificates include expiry dates or information about reassessment. This creates ambiguity for specifiers trying to verify current compliance;
- **inconsistent certificate content and format**: there is no agreed format across schemes, even for similar product types. While there is nothing fundamentally wrong with difference, it limits comparability and can hinder product specification decisions;
- **limited disclosure of test results or determination methods**: while some schemes clearly explain which tests have been carried out, others rely on references to standards without reporting results or test conditions;

6.25. Greater clarity, transparency, and accessibility in certification outputs may support better-informed decisions across the sector, particularly for non-specialist users.

Cost range assessments

6.26. The analysis of costs associated with third-party certification schemes reveals a wide range of potential costs, strongly influenced by product complexity, testing requirements, and the scope of certification. Publicly available information on costs is extremely limited, and schemes do not publish standard pricing.

6.27. Based on anonymised stakeholder feedback, costs for certification typically range from under £20,000 for simple products to over £100,000 for highly complex systems.

6.28. Initial certification often falls between £5,000 and £10,000 in year one, with annual surveillance fees ranging from £2,000 to £5,000.

6.29. In the mid-range, certification costs for more complex systems, such as external wall insulation, typically cluster around £30,000 to £40,000.

6.30. At the top end, innovative or modular products requiring extensive testing and certification development can incur costs exceeding £100,000.

6.31. Across the schemes, it was consistently noted that certification costs are calculated based on a time-costing model, reflecting the number of product variations, the scale of manufacturing operations, and the complexity of the assessment required. Stakeholders also highlighted that manufacturers can manage certification costs by limiting the scope of certification to specific essential characteristics. Overall, the highly tailored nature of certification processes means that a single standardised tariff is impractical across the sector.

7. Conclusion

7.1. This report presents findings from a review of third-party certification schemes for construction products in the United Kingdom, examining their scope, structure, and role within the wider regulatory and market context.

7.2. The research highlights that third-party certification is marked by considerable variation. Schemes differ in purpose, structure, and the extent to which they provide transparency and public access to information.

7.3. There is no single framework or uniform baseline across schemes, and no mandatory requirement to follow a specific standards model. UKAS accredits CABs under ISO/IEC 17065 and other relevant standards, and ISO/IEC 17067 provides useful guidance on scheme types. In practice, the depth and nature of conformity assessment varies significantly.

7.4. Interviews with CABs confirmed robust approaches to certification and keen awareness of the importance of accreditation in assuring product conformity.

7.5. However, the analysis confirms that scheme adoption is uneven across the market. It is more common for products considered to have lower safety risks or where there are clear regulatory, warranty or insurance-driven incentives. Elsewhere, uptake is influenced by manufacturer preference, market convention, and perceptions of value.

7.6. Even where schemes claim robust processes, this is not always apparent from publicly available information. Issues of accessibility, clarity and information provision were found. Website analysis and stakeholder feedback identified concerns around the availability of certificates, inconsistency in certificate structure and language, and challenges in verifying validity or scope. Some schemes offer detailed technical documentation, whereas others provide minimal public-facing information.

7.7. Across the sample, it was not always clear whether certificates remained valid, how they were maintained, or whether they reflected current products and standards. The level of ongoing oversight - through surveillance, audit testing or factory inspections - was not always disclosed in certification outputs.

7.8. Public information on certification costs is scarce. Costs range from under £20,000 to £100,000 (and sometimes reaching £250,000). Costs are typically calculated using time-costing models based on certification scope, product complexity/variation and testing requirements.

7.9. For users of scheme data, the landscape can be difficult to navigate. The lack of standardised formats, variable terminology, and limited access to test results or scope limitations may contribute to confusion or misinterpretation.

7.10. Overall, the evidence suggests that while third-party certification plays an important role in market assurance, its effectiveness is contingent on the clarity, consistency and accessibility of the schemes themselves. Greater transparency and standardisation may support better understanding and use of certification across the construction product supply chain.

Annex A - Discussion topics for third-party schemes

This Annex contains the discussion script and topics used for the stakeholder consultations made during this study. This document was sent to schemes in advance. Notes of the conversations were made and sent to schemes after the meetings for them to review. Following review, stakeholder's views were summarised and anonymised.

2025 02 17

Discussion Topics for Third Party Schemes Evidence Development

Introduction

PRP and Adroit Economics are working with the Construction Products team at the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in continuing the development of policy options for the potential reform of the wider construction products system.

The review was announced in Parliament in September 2024 where the government stated that it was committing to system wide reform of the construction products regulatory regime.

The Construction Products team is focused on building its knowledge and evidence base. Our work is supporting the team with the information necessary to support the creation of informed, supported policy reforms.

The importance of Third-party certification schemes

The government recognises the role of UK conformity assessment bodies in ensuring compliance of goods on the market. As part of the reforms the government stated that it will work with UK conformity assessment bodies, the UK Accreditation Service, and the wider industry to strengthen the conformity assessment market.

This work also reflects the results of the Independent Review of the Construction Products Testing Regime which considered that "*although the level of scrutiny provided by the best voluntary schemes may be higher than the regulatory AVCP process, the form and content of such schemes is variable, as is the degree of rigour and independence of oversight - and consequently the trust that the market might want to place in products covered by the schemes.*"

PRP and Adroit Economics are supporting an assessment of the evidence relating to the findings of the Independent Review and the coverage of third-party certification schemes in the UK.

Request for discussion

We are particularly keen to gather the views of third-party certification scheme owners and are doing a number of consultation discussion to provide an up-to-date picture for MHCLG. We would be interested in your views of how the market and how it is developing, whether demand from your customers is changing and, more generally, whether you see any capacity issues or other driving factors that policy makers should consider.

Discussion topics
We would like to structure our discussion as follows:

Scheme operations

- your role and responsibilities;
- background to the scheme and how it fits with wider business activities;
- products/systems covered – trends and how things are changing;
- standards covered and use of ISO/IEC international standards;
- ongoing oversight of certified companies;
- extent to which you publish results or statistics on certificates issued;
- availability of certificates online?
- range of costs for certification services (at a high level).

Scheme Manufacturing Requirements

- do you have requirements for manufacturing control processes?
- do you carry out continuous surveillance or ongoing oversight?
- how do you address product changes or manufacturing changes?

Scheme Installation and Maintenance Requirements

- do you have installation requirements?
- do you have product maintenance requirements?

Scheme Certificates

- format and structure;
- certificate dates and expiration dates;
- process for drafting and finalising text and use of technical language.

Test results

- do you/how do you verify test data?
- relationships with other CABs or test houses to provide test data?

Relationship between the scheme and the CAB

- how does the scheme function alongside the CAB.

Customers

- number and types of customers and split by UK/overseas;
- how customer demands are changing;
- how many are SMEs and how do they fare compared with bigger organisations;
- diversity of customer base.

The market and future

- your views of the market and how it's changing;
- impact of the Hackitt Review, the Independent Review of the Construction Products Testing Regime and the ongoing Grenfell Inquiry;
- impact of the Building Safety Act and the Building Safety Regulator.

Issues for MHCLG

- Issues you feel MHCLG should be aware of in developing policy.

Process and basis for the discussion

- We are considering producing a small number of case studies as part of our work and would like to ask whether you would like to be included in this process; case studies will be based on solely publicly available information.
- Before we begin our discussion, we will agree the basis on which we report to MHCLG; we are happy to report back in whatever way you like – this can be through anonymised notes of our meeting or on a fully attributable basis.
- We will provide you with a copy of our meeting notes prior to a report to MHCLG.

Annex B - Literature review and context

This section presents a synthesis of key findings from existing literature and reports relevant to third-party certification schemes in the UK construction products sector. The literature review focuses on gathering insights from previous government consultations, industry reports, and regulatory inquiries to establish the current landscape, challenges, and recommendations related to third-party certification.

The literature review is structured to highlight:

- findings from prior industry and regulatory reports that discuss the role of third-party certification in ensuring product safety, quality, and compliance;
- key recommendations from major inquiries and reviews, including the Hackitt Report, Grenfell Tower Inquiry, Building Safety Consultation, and the Morrell-Day Review;
- regulatory and standards frameworks, mapping how third-party certification aligns with UK and international requirements;
- gaps in the existing evidence base, identifying areas where further research or policy development may be needed.

Taken together these insights, provide a foundation for understanding how third-party certification is used and scrutinised by regulators, industry stakeholders, and policymakers. This section also provides context for the empirical research reported in this study.

Key insights from prior reports

This section includes excerpts of recent construction industry reports which present research or recommendations on third-party certification on construction products.

Building a Safer Future, Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety Final Report, 2018, Dame Judith Hackitt

Within, 'Building a Safer Future, Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety Final Report', 2018, Dame Judith Hackitt made recommendation on third-party certification [**the bold text below highlights key insights relevant to third-party certification**]:

Recommendation 7.1

a. A **clearer, more transparent** and more effective specification and testing regime of construction products must be developed. This should include products as they are put together as part of a system.

b. Clear **statements on what systems products can and cannot be used for** should be developed and their use made essential. This should ensure significantly reduced scope for substitution of any products used in a system without further full testing. Until such time, manufacturers should ensure that they adhere to the current limitations set out in classification reports in the current regime.

c. The scope of testing, the application of products in systems, and the resulting implications must be more clearly communicated in plain, consistent, nontechnical language.

Recommendation 7.2

a. Manufacturers must **retest products that are critical to the safety of HRRBs at least every three years**. Manufacturers should consider the need to test more frequently, focusing especially on the testing of products as they operate in systems rather than individual elements.

b. The testing of products that are critical to the safety of HRRBs should be subject to independent third-party certification.

c. The introduction of the JCA should drive the introduction of reactive testing when particular issues of concern arise regarding products installed that are critical to the safety of HRRBs.

d. Additional test houses should be established and certified.

e. All test houses should produce an annual report providing summary details of tests carried out and the **number of passes and failures reported**."

Summary of key recommendations for third-party certification:

- clearer, more transparent statements on what systems products can and cannot be used;
- the scope of testing, the application of products in systems, … in plain, consistent, non-technical language;
- retest products that are critical to the safety of HRRBs at least every three years;
- number of passes and failures reported.

Building a Safer Future, Proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system Consultation 2019

In June 2019 MHCLG consulted on 'Building a Safer Future, Proposals for reform of the building safety regulatory system' and included a series of questions on introducing 'the umbrella minimum standard' for third-party certification schemes. The following areas were proposed for the umbrella standard:

- products should be re-tested at random within a specified period;
- failures and concerns regarding a product must be reported to the relevant regulator(s) immediately;
- a consistent format for certification documents that is accessible and useful to building owners and residents;

- a statement on the limitations of a product's certification alongside expectations of how manufacturers advertise independent assurance certification;
- compliance of scheme operators to the requirements of BS EN ISO IEC 17065:2012;
- proactive monitoring of products through market surveillance.

Most respondents agreed with the areas above and proposed including, in addition:

- manufacturers to take more responsibility for encouraging and informing correct installation of their products;
- Installation – responders proposed that installation be a more prominent part of the standard;
- longevity and maintainability of construction products – organisations and collective bodies raised the need for the longevity and maintainability of construction products to be considered alongside the requirements set out in the consultation;
- product testing – it was proposed that the new Building Safety Regulator should be notified of product test failures. Other responders believed it should be incumbent on manufacturers or test houses to publish test data.

Summary of key recommendations for third-party certification:

- re-test at random within a specified period;
- use a consistent format;
- include a statement on limitations;
- follow the requirements of ISO/IEC 17065:2012;
- installation should be a more prominent part of the certification;
- information on longevity and maintainability should be included in the certificate;
- the Building Safety Regulator should be notified of product test failures and test houses should publish test data.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report 2024

The Grenfell Tower Phase 2 Report makes the following recommendations on third-party certification schemes:

113.20 Manufacturers were able to use misleading marketing material in part because the certification bodies that provided assurance to the market of the quality and characteristics of the products failed to ensure that the statements in the certificates they issued were accurate and based on appropriate and relevant test evidence. The United Kingdom Assessment Service (UKAS), the organisation charged with accrediting them, failed to apply proper standards of monitoring and supervision. The fact that three separate manufacturers were able to obtain misleading certificates relating to their products is evidence of a serious failure of the system and points to a need for a different approach to the certification of construction products.

113.21 “We do not think that the appointment of a National Regulator of Construction Products will solve the problem because the system will still depend on the effectiveness of the conformity assessment bodies and the limited oversight of UKAS. Conformity assessment bodies provide a commercial service combined with an element of regulation, but the two functions do not sit easily together. Pressure to acquire and retain customers can all too easily lead such bodies to be less rigorous in their examination of products and materials and enforcing their terms of contracts than could reasonably be expected of bodies acting in the public interest.”

113.22 “We therefore recommend that the construction regulator should be responsible for assessing the conformity of construction products with the requirements of legislation, statutory guidance and industry standards and issuing certificates as appropriate. We should expect such certificates to become pre-eminent in the market.”

113.23 “In our view clarity is required to avoid those who rely on certificates of conformity being misled. We therefore recommend a. that copies of all test results supporting any certificate issued by the construction regulator be included in the certificate; b. that manufacturers be required to provide the construction regulator with the full testing history of the product or material to which the certificate relates and inform the regulator of any material circumstances that may affect its performance; and c. manufacturers be required by law to provide on request copies of all test results that support claims about fire performance made for their products.”

Summary of key recommendations for third-party certification:

- copies of all test results supporting any certificate issued by the construction regulator be included in the certificate;
- full testing history of the product or material to which the certificate;
- provide on request copies of all test results that support claims about fire performance made for their products.’

Testing for a Safer Future, An Independent Review of the Construction Products Testing Regime, Paul Morrell OBE and Anneliese Day KC, 2023

The Morrell-Day Review presented research and made 20 recommendations:

Section 13.2 explains that “at the top end of the scale, they [third-party certification schemes] actually sit above the highest level of the AVCP system, with more series production audit testing, and clearer requirements for labelling and traceability; and some schemes also include or connect to certification of installation”.

Section 32 of the report states that, “although the level and scrutiny provided by the best voluntary schemes may be higher than the regulatory AVCP process, the form and content of such schemes is variable, as is the degree of rigour and independence of oversight…”. It goes on to discuss that it should be possible to identify a framework and high-level principles for schemes. The following high-level principles were proposed;

a. clear standards which lead to the desired outcome and against which performance can be assessed;

b. equally clear standards for the testing methodology to be adopted in certifying performance;

c. a conformity assessment process which follows all the steps of AVCP system 1+ (so, to include continuing random sampling), save where that is rendered impractical by virtue of the nature of the product;

d. certification documents that follow a standardised format, are clear as to the limitations of the product's certification, and are accessible and useful to building owners and residents;

e. independence, impartiality and accreditation (to an appropriate standard) of the body responsible for the conformity assessment process, all underpinned by effective governance;

f. accessibility to the scheme for any manufacturer that subscribes to its rules – so the scheme cannot for example, be exclusive to members of a trade association, and should probably not be owned by them (although ISO/IEC 17065 does acknowledge that a trade association may be the scheme owner);

g. the other safeguards that follow the conformity assessment process, including clear and honest declarations of performance, marketing and product information, and traceability;

h. market surveillance, a means of reporting non-compliance, and a guarantee of appropriate action in response.

Recommendation 14, regarding voluntary third-party certification: to increase the scope and ensure the rigour of third-party certification schemes', included:

Government and industry to develop a plan to increase the operation of voluntary third-party schemes for non-safety-critical construction products, to include:

a. a survey of schemes that currently exist;

b. the scope and appetite for those schemes to be brought under a common set of principles designed to introduce consistency and rigour, and the agreement of those principles;

c. the potential for additional schemes to be brought forward, and the incentive both for creating and subscribing to them, including the possibility of government endorsement;

d. how schemes might be modified or developed from scratch, and by whom.

UKAS/CABS to establish a national oversight committee to oversee CAB's activities in the conduct of voluntary third-party certification schemes, in order to advise on the need for and quality of schemes, to respond to concerns about any evidence of a lack of impartiality in the process, and to provide a right of appeal against decisions made in that process.'

The report explains in section 33 that there is "scope of alignment, with the principles of the Code [for Construction Product Information] being embedded in third-party schemes…". Recommendation 15.2 states that, 'government and industry to consider whether and how the Code and third-party certification could best work together to achieve their shared objectives...'.

In summary, Morell-Day Review's key recommendations for third-party certification call for clear standards for all aspects of certification including testing methodologies, a conformity assessment process which follows all the steps of AVCP system 1+ (save where that is rendered impractical by virtue of the nature of the product), certification documents that follow a standardised format and are clear as to the limitations of the product's certification, clear and honest declarations of performance, clear marketing and product information and traceability, and better accessibility to schemes.

Annex C - Comparison between warranty provider requirements and the eleven certification schemes studied

AC.1 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme A's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme A. Cladding system certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and revision dates.
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	Yes
	Intended use and in what context	Yes
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Some, not all
	Identify components which are out of scope	Partly
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	Yes
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	Yes
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	Yes
	Water tightness/penetration	Yes
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	Limited Information
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	Some information
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	Yes
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Yes (QMS and PQS (Production Quality Specification), Annual verification procedure)
Installation	Installation	Yes (Includes details and refers to Installation Manual. Installation by Approved Installer)
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	Yes (non-definitive statements)
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme A certificate for a cladding system

Table AC.2 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme B's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme B. Cladding system certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and revision dates.
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	Yes
	Intended use and in what context	Yes
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Not clear
	Identify components which are out of scope	Partly
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	Yes
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	Yes
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	Yes
	Water tightness/penetration	Yes
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	Yes
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	Yes
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	Yes
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Yes (quality control procedures, testing, equipment checked, surveillance processes)
Installation	Installation	refers to installation manual. Installers must be approved, recommended or recognised by certificate holder
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	Yes (non-definitive statements)
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme B certificate for a cladding system

Table AC.3 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme C's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme C. Cladding system certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	Yes
	Intended use and in what context	Yes
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Not clear
	Identify components which are out of scope	No
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	Yes
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	Yes
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	Yes
	Water tightness/penetration	Yes
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	Yes
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	No
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	No
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Yes, surveillance includes reviewing FPC.
Installation	Installation	No
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme C certificate for a cladding system

3) Voluntary third-party certification scheme C surveillance guidance document

Table AC.4 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme D's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme D. Fire extinguisher certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and expiry date
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	List available but not to download
Scope	Product description	Yes
	Intended use and in what context	No
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Not fully clear
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	No
	Identify components which are out of scope	No
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	No
	Fire Safety	No
	Thermal performance	No
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	No
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	No
	Water tightness/penetration	No
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	No
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	No
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	No
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Yes Type 5 Scheme.
Installation	Installation	No
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme D certificate

3) Voluntary third-party certification scheme D surveillance guidance document

Table AC.5 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme E's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme E. Cladding panel certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	No
	Intended use and in what context	No
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Not clear
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Not clear
	Identify components which are out of scope	No
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	No
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	No
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	No
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	No
	Water tightness/penetration	No
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	No
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	No
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	No
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Surveillance includes review of ISO 9001 and FPC processes.
Installation	Installation	No. Possibly within a referenced document we were unable to locate.
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme E certificate

Table AC.6 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme F's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme F. Fire door certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and expiry date
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	Yes
	Intended use and in what context	Yes
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Yes
	Identify components which are out of scope	Yes
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	No
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	No
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	No
	Water tightness/penetration	No
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	Yes
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	No
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	Reference to manufacturer published information.
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	ISO 9001, inspection and surveillance of FPC, audit testing, annual factory visit.
Installation	Installation	Yes
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme F certificate

Table AC.7 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme G's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme G. Fire door certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and expiry date
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	Yes
Scope	Product description	No
	Intended use and in what context	No
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Not clear
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Not clear
	Identify components which are out of scope	Not clear
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	No
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	No
	Acoustic characteristics	No
	Movement characteristics	No
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	No
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	No
	Water tightness/penetration	No
	Release of dangerous substances	No
	Compatibility of materials and components	No
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	No
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	No
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Inspection of FPC, audits, sample testing from production.
Installation	Installation	No
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	Yes

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme G certificate

   Voluntary third-party certification scheme G general requirements document

Table AC.8 A warranty provider’s requirements and Scheme H’s certification scheme elements

Scheme H certificate not available

Table AC.9 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme I's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme I. Insulated timber panels
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and expiry date
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	No
Scope	Product description	No
	Intended use and in what context	No
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Not clear
	Identify components which are out of scope	Not clear
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	Yes
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	Yes
	Acoustic characteristics	Unknown
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	Yes
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	Yes
	Water tightness/penetration	Yes
	Release of dangerous substances	Unknown
	Compatibility of materials and components	Yes
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	Unknown
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	Unknown
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	No but certification renewed annually.
Installation	Installation	No
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	No

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme I certificate

Table AC.10 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme J's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme J. Timber frame certificate
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid?	Dated and expiry date
	Is it available on the certifier's website?	No
Scope	Product description	No
	Intended use and in what context	No
	Clear what are the product/system components?	Yes
	Have all the components been tested/certified?	Not clear
	Identify components which are out of scope	Not clear
Technical assessment points	Structural integrity	Yes
	Fire Safety	Yes
	Thermal performance	Yes
	Acoustic characteristics	Unknown
	Movement characteristics	Yes
	Safety in use (when appropriate)	Yes
	Vapour permeability and moisture resistance	Yes
	Water tightness/penetration	Yes
	Release of dangerous substances	Unknown
	Compatibility of materials and components	Yes
	Durability and longevity/lifespan	Unknown
	Maintenance requirements and provisions	Unknown
Surveillance	Processes and sampling	Yes, factory inspections.
Installation	Installation	No
Regulation	Whether product meets Building Regulations?	No
Testing	Details of the tests the product/system has undergone	No

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Voluntary third-party certification scheme J certificate. Voluntary third-party certification scheme J, scheme rules

Table AC.11 A warranty provider's requirements and Scheme K's certification scheme elements

Scheme element	Requirements in Premiere Guarantee Technical Manual Version 14	Third-Party Certification Scheme K. Scheme not yet launched.
Validity	Dated and any revision dates? When becomes invalid? Is it available on the certifier's website?	Scheme not yet launched so information unknown Yes, will be.

Sources

1) Annex C of Technical Manual Version 14, Premiere Guarantee (requires registration)

2) Guide to Third-Party Product Conformity Approval Certificates, Premiere Guarantee

3) Scheme K website

Annex D - Definitions

Term	Definition
AVCP	Assessment and Verification of Constancy of Performance: A system defined under the UK Construction Products Regulations (UK-CPR) to evaluate and verify product consistency with declared performance.
BBA	British Board of Agrément: A UK certification body providing approval, certification, and test services to manufacturers.
BSI	British Standards Institution: A UK certification body providing approval, certification, and test services to manufacturers. A separate division of the company is the UK's national standards body responsible for producing technical standards and certifying products and services.
CAB	Conformity Assessment Body: An organisation that performs conformity assessment services such as testing, inspection, or certification to ensure product compliance.
CPR	Construction Products Regulation: Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 laying down harmonised conditions for the marketing of construction products; retained in UK law following the UK's departure from the European Union as the UK-CPR.
FPC	Factory Production Control: A documented control system used by manufacturers to ensure that production processes result in consistent product performance.
HRRB	Higher-Risk Residential Building: As defined under UK building safety legislation, typically buildings over 18m or with other risk factors.
ISO	International Organization for Standardization: A global body that develops and publishes international standards.
ISO/IEC 17025	General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories. An international standard.
ISO/IEC 17065	Conformity assessment – Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes and services. An international standard.
ISO/IEC 17067	Conformity assessment – Fundamentals of product certification and guidelines for product certification schemes. An international standard.

Term	Definition
QMS	Quality Management System: A formalised system documenting processes, procedures, and responsibilities for achieving quality objectives.
UKAS	United Kingdom Accreditation Service: The UK’s national accreditation body responsible for assessing organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection, and calibration services.
UK-CPR	GB Construction Products Regulations: The UK’s retained version of the EU Construction Products Regulation, governing the marketing of construction products in Great Britain.

Annex E - References

General Principles for the Assessment of Conformity Assessment Bodies by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service, 4/03/2025 [Accessed 10 January 2026]

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