



The Certification Mark for Onsite
Sustainable Energy Technologies

MCS Newsletter February 2014

Updates to Standards, Competency Criteria and RHI Information



The Certification Mark for Onsite Sustainable Energy Technologies

In the February Issue.....

In this edition of the MCS newsletter, MCS will be updating Installers primarily on the changes to the Installer Standards, along with the launch of the new Competency Criteria.

If you are not on our mailing list yet, you can subscribe here.

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www.microgenerationcertification.org

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MCS is pleased to announce two key new initiatives designed to help installers get involved with the Scheme. To find out more information, please [click here](#).

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From 16th March 2014, Heat Technology installers will be required to upload an MCS Compliance Certificate. For more information about this change, please [click here](#).

Ofgem: Useful Information

Ofgem have published information in the lead up to the RHI launch, and issued a reminder about providing relevant information to consumers. Further information regarding both these issues, can be [found here](#).

RHI Training Voucher Scheme Extended

Due to high demand, the RHI Training Voucher Scheme has been extended. See [here](#) for further information.

MCS Events

MCS is attending Ecobuild 2014, and we will be running a series of presentations on updates to the scheme and on RHI. [Read more here](#).

For further information please contact the MCS Helpdesk on
Tel: +44 (0)20 7090 1082 / Email: mcs@gemserv.com

REMINDER: Update to Standards and Clearer Path to Certification [1]



As previously announced MCS released updates to all heat technology installation standards on

16th December 2013. All installers must comply with the revised standards from **16th March 2014**. Please be aware that the updates are significant and you must take action to ensure you are ready to implement the updates by 16th March 2014. Therefore please make sure that you have reviewed the revised standards and that you have updated your processes accordingly. A summary of the changes can be found via the MCS website (www.microgenerationcertification.org).

Changes to Heat Technology Standards

In order to fully support the launch in spring of the domestic RHI, MCS has been doing a lot of work to modify the installer standards for the heat technologies (Biomass, Solar Thermal and Heat Pumps). The MCS Working Groups have updated the standards to ensure that MCS heat technology installations can robustly meet all the requirements that will enable government to make MCS the requirement for customers wishing to

access the incentive.

In particular we would like to highlight the following changes:

- **Solar thermal and heat pumps:** MCS installers are required to attach a label to the installation as outlined in the appendices of both the solar thermal and heat pump standards.
- **Solar thermal - domestic hot water installations only:** A new solar thermal energy calculation methodology has been released which is outlined in the document MCS 024. In order to assist MCS installers in making these calculations a calculator has also been released called the Thermal Solar Performance Energy Calculator (TSPEC). Installers must use this calculator when working out the annual energy input kWh/year and enter this figure into the MCS Installation Database (MID).
- **All Heat Technologies:** For all heat technology installations intended for the domestic RHI, MCS installers are now required to meet the requirements of the MCS domestic RHI metering guidance.

The largest change, however, has been focused on the addition of compliance certificates for heat installations.

REMINDER: Update to Standards and Clearer Path to Certification [2]

This certificate is designed to be viewed as a checklist for installation companies to complete and confirm the suitability of the installation to the relevant MIS standard. An MCS compliance certificate must be completed for all heat MCS installations. A copy must be supplied to the customer and will be required if the customer wishes to apply for the domestic RHI where the installation is eligible.

A Clearer Path to Certification

This initiative is aimed at helping installers better understand how to become certified and making it clearer how to up-skill and re-skill in response to changes, such as the introduction of the domestic RHI.

MCS remains a scheme where it is the company that is certified to carry out installations. However, it has always been recognised that a company demonstrates competence mainly through its operatives, whether those operatives have formal training, industry experience or a combination of both.

On 16th December 2013, MCS published the competency criteria that details how experience and training can be combined so that the company can be certified.

This competency criteria now gives a much clearer bridge between the skills and experience of the individuals, and what a company must demonstrate, in order for that company to become MCS certified.

We now have a framework of roles against which the criteria are mapped so that individuals can understand how the criteria are likely to apply to their role within their company. Most roles can be combined or shared as required – the framework is designed for every size and type of installer company.

We have also made available, for free on the MCS website, a Competency Checker Tool to support use of these frameworks. The qualifications checking and ‘Experienced Workers Route’ functions it contains can be used to help identify which roles and criteria the installer believes they already fulfil, and prompt the installer to assemble evidence they can present to their MCS Certification Body for evaluation.

The new competency criteria and assessment are being phased in from 16th March 2014, applying initially to new certifications, and with a transition period of up to three surveillance visits for existing installers to work to them. All installation activity under the scheme will at all times have to meet the MCS standards, giving real confidence to consumers.

REMINDER: Update to Standards and Clearer Path to Certification [3]

The new competency criteria, supporting guidance framework, and IT tool will guide installer companies in demonstrating how their staff's combined industry experience and formal training demonstrates the relevant competence for the company to gain certification. The framework places an equal emphasis on experience and on qualifications; because we know the key is to help installers show Certification Bodies that their company is competent. This is a big step forward in making the whole process more transparent from the installer's perspective.

For information regarding the revised Standards and the Competency Criteria project, please visit www.microgenerationcertification.org.

Changes to the registration of Heat Technologies and Compliance Certificates

Heat Technology installers will soon be required to upload an MCS compliance certificate in PDF format. These compliance certificates confirm that you have met the requirements of the MCS standard and records key information relating to the installation. A copy must be supplied to the customer and will be required if the customer wishes to apply for domestic RHI where the installation is eligible. Copies

the installation is eligible. Copies of the compliance certificates are available from the installer standards section of the MCS website:

www.microgenerationcertification.org/mcs-standards/installer-standards

Installers will be presented with a new page for uploading a copy of the MCS compliance certificate which will be mandatory for all installations. In addition, a number of technology specific questions will be added to the form. This additional information will be recorded for auditing purposes both by MCS Certification Bodies and, where appropriate, OFGEM will have access to this data for the purpose of the domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI).

In the next few months we will be issuing further guidance and adding functionality allowing installers to upload an Excel version of the compliance certificate. The information entered onto this Excel compliance certificate will then populate a cleaner and more customer friendly compliance certificate which will be generated along with the MCS certificate. We will provide further updates once this added functionality is made available.

Launch of the Domestic RHI

The domestic RHI scheme is due to launch in spring 2014, so Ofgem are busy preparing for launch. When it does, you'll be able to get full information, guides and videos, and will be able to apply from [this site](#).

Until then, Ofgem have produced some [factsheets](#) to give you some basic information in advance. They're only designed as tasters. You'll have to wait until the scheme opens to read their comprehensive guides.

Reminder to Provide Relevant Information to Consumers

As well as all installations having to be 'meter-ready', when an installation will have to be metered for payment on the Domestic RHI – further information [here](#) – an MCS installer will have further responsibilities. These are detailed in [Section 6 of the MCS Domestic RHI Metering Guidance](#), but particular note should be taken of the fact that it will be the installer's responsibility to complete and leave with their customer a copy of Ofgem's Installer Metering Questions (IMQs).

This document will assist the customer in completing their online application form for the Domestic RHI and

it will be required that all applicants to the RHI who require metering for payment are provided with a completed copy of the IMQs by their MCS installer. Installers should also clearly label all meters, explain to the customer how to take readings and provide within the IMQs an initial baseline meter reading to the customer (see 6.3 of the MCS Domestic RHI Metering Guidance).

There are two versions of the IMQs available – one each for biomass or heat pump installations (solar thermal will never require metering for payment) – and both templates can be downloaded from [Ofgem's website](#). These will be made available once the scheme has launched. There will also be further guidance made available for installers at launch – an Essential Guide for Installers and a more in-depth Essential Guide to Metering. Installers should make themselves familiar with these guides, as they will help to ensure their customers will be eligible to claim the domestic RHI.

Where meters cannot be placed to capture only the eligible heat output of the renewable installation (eg the meter also captures heat from a back-up fossil plant and further metering is required to deduct this heat from RHI payments), the installer will also need to complete an Alternative Metering Arrangements template and leave with the customer. This template will give further details about the metering arrangement and will include a simple diagram/schematic. This template will also be available for download from Ofgem's website.

Training voucher scheme to help cross-skill heating engineers to renewable heating systems extended due to high demand



The £500,000 fund aimed at expanding the skill set of domestic heating engineers to include the installation and maintenance of renewable heating systems has been extended by an additional £150,000 by Energy and Climate Change Minister Greg Barker during a visit to Grant Engineering UK in Devizes, Wiltshire.

The scheme, which includes an apprenticeship initiative, has been subject to high demand from heating engineers and apprentices alike. Based on the early indications of interest and the number of vouchers already issued, the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has decided to increase the funding for the scheme in order to further bolster the supply chain in the run up to the launch of the domestic RHI. The full press release can be read [here](#).

Please contact GTEC Training for any queries regarding the RHI Voucher Scheme: info@rhitraining.co.uk



Ecobuild 2014 (4th - 6th March 2014)

MCS is pleased to confirm our attendance at Ecobuild 2014, a world leading event for sustainable design, construction, energy and the build environment.

We will be hosting presentations regarding the updated standards and competency criteria, as well as those focussed on the upcoming domestic RHI scheme. For a detailed agenda, please see [here](#).

Please come and find us at Stand N2050.

MCS will be also be presenting on DECC's stand (N2150).

Please visit www.ecobuild.co.uk for further information.



The Microgeneration Certification Scheme