



The Certification Mark for Onsite  
Sustainable Energy Technologies

# A Guide for Contractors and Product Manufacturers



## INTRODUCTION

The Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) is an industry-led quality assurance scheme, supported by the UK Government. MCS works with the third party certification framework of ISO/IEC 17065:2012 and was launched in 2007.

The Scheme certifies microgeneration products used to produce electricity and heat from renewable or low carbon sources. Installation companies are also certified to ensure the microgeneration products have been installed and commissioned to the standards expected for the consumer.

## SCHEME GOVERNANCE

MCS is overseen by an executive function and supported by industry experts.

The MCS standards are developed and maintained by Technical Working Groups which include product manufacturers, contractors, trade associations, academics and other stakeholders.

As well as this, many members of the Technical Working Groups sit on European International Committees to develop the European International Standards. This helps to harmonise MCS with existing EN, ISO and IEC Standards, and ensure that the MCS Standards and Scheme documents are all kept up to date.

## Technologies covered by MCS:

### Electricity Generating (up to 50kW)



**Solar Photovoltaic (PV)** panels generate electricity by using solar cells to convert energy from the sun into electricity.



**Wind Turbines** harness the power of the wind and use it to generate electricity.

### Co-generation (up to 50kW for electricity, 45kW for heat)



**Micro Combined Heat & Power (Micro CHP)** is the simultaneous production of heat and electricity. Effectively the Micro-CHP unit replaces the gas central heating boiler and provides heat and hot water as usual, but additionally can provide a home's electricity needs.

### Pitched Roof Mounting Kits\*

*\*Product Manufacturer Standard only*



**Pitched Roof Mounting Kits** are used to ensure solar panels are secured when installed on a pitched roof. The mounting kits have been tested for weather tightness, fire spread and wind uplift. It is mandatory for PV panels installed on a pitched roof, to use an MCS approved roof mounting kit to be MCS approved.

## HOW DOES MCS WORK?

MCS is an industry-led quality assurance scheme, which demonstrates the quality and reliability of approved products and installation companies.

For certified products, this is ensured through satisfying rigorous and established European and International Standards. Contractor certification includes assessing the supply, design, installation, set-to-work, commissioning and handover of microgeneration technologies. Similar to the Gas Safe Register, MCS gives contractors a mark of quality which assures to customers that installations are completed to an expected quality every time.

## Third Party Certification

Third party certification is an assessment carried out by an independent, third party organisation to ensure compliance with a technical specification. The Certification Bodies that carry out MCS certification and assessment are accredited by UKAS and licensed by the MCS Administrator to issue MCS certification when the assessment is successfully completed. The Certification Bodies operate within the ISO/IEC17065 accreditation framework.

This means that a company that holds MCS certification has demonstrated to the Certification Body that they meet the requirements outlined in the relevant MCS Standards and Scheme requirements. Furthermore, MCS certified companies are required to comply with annual surveillance audits to ensure an ongoing compliance to these standards and scheme requirements.

Please visit our website to view the current list of Certification Bodies:

[www.microgenerationcertification.org/installers-manufacturers/certification-bodies](http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/installers-manufacturers/certification-bodies)

## Heat Generating (up to 45kW\*)



**Air Source Heat Pumps** absorb heat from the outside air. This is usually used to heat radiators, under-floor heating systems, or warm air convectors and hot water.



**Biomass** heating systems burn wood in the form of pellets, chips or logs to provide heating and hot water for the home.



**Exhaust Air Heat Pumps** absorb heat from the waste air leaving a building. It is then extracted and upgraded into useful heat energy for domestic hot water.



**Gas Absorption Heat Pumps** use gas to drive the heat transfer process using the partial pressures of two different chemicals at low pressure.



**Ground/Water Source Heat Pumps** transfer heat from the ground into a building to provide space heating and, in some cases, to pre-heat domestic hot water.



**Solar Assisted Heat Pumps** absorb atmospheric heat (e.g via an external absorber) and turn this into useful heat energy for domestic hot water.



**Solar Thermal** collectors absorb sunlight to heat a liquid which can be used for domestic hot water.

*\*Individual product limit is 45kW, however installations using multiple products with a design heat load requirement of up to 70kWth are allowed.*

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED?

MCS sets out the requirements for installer companies and product companies in its Scheme documents and Standards. These are the requirements your company or products are certified against by the Certification Body.

### MCS Contractor Certification\*

In order to undertake MCS certification, an installation company will be asked to demonstrate how they engage the services of skilled, competent, and experienced individuals to fulfil each activity required to meet and maintain the requirements of the scheme. This includes confirmation of the competence of those individuals involved in the supply, design, installation, set-to-work and commissioning and handover of microgeneration systems for which the company is seeking certification.

Contractors are certified against the MCS standards by a Certification Body.

#### Routes to Certification

- **Qualifications**  
Allows the company the ability to demonstrate, and evidence, that their workforce have undertaken approved qualifications or short courses relevant to the technology and meets in full the competence criteria.
- **Experienced Workers Route**  
Allows the company the ability to demonstrate, and evidence, through the assessment process that in the absence of insufficient qualifications or short course training that the workforce nominated are competent.
- **Combined Route**  
Allows the company to meet the criteria through a combination of the aforementioned routes.

For further guidance on the routes to certification please download our competency criteria guidance document: [www.microgenerationcertification.org/competency-criteria](http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/competency-criteria)

### MCS Product Certification

Product manufacturers may obtain MCS certification if their products are within the scope of the Scheme. To obtain MCS certification for your products you will need to read the relevant product standard.

After you have read these documents you will need to contact a Certification Body who will assess your product(s) against the technical product standard and visit your factory to ensure that the production environment and processes meet the MCS requirements.

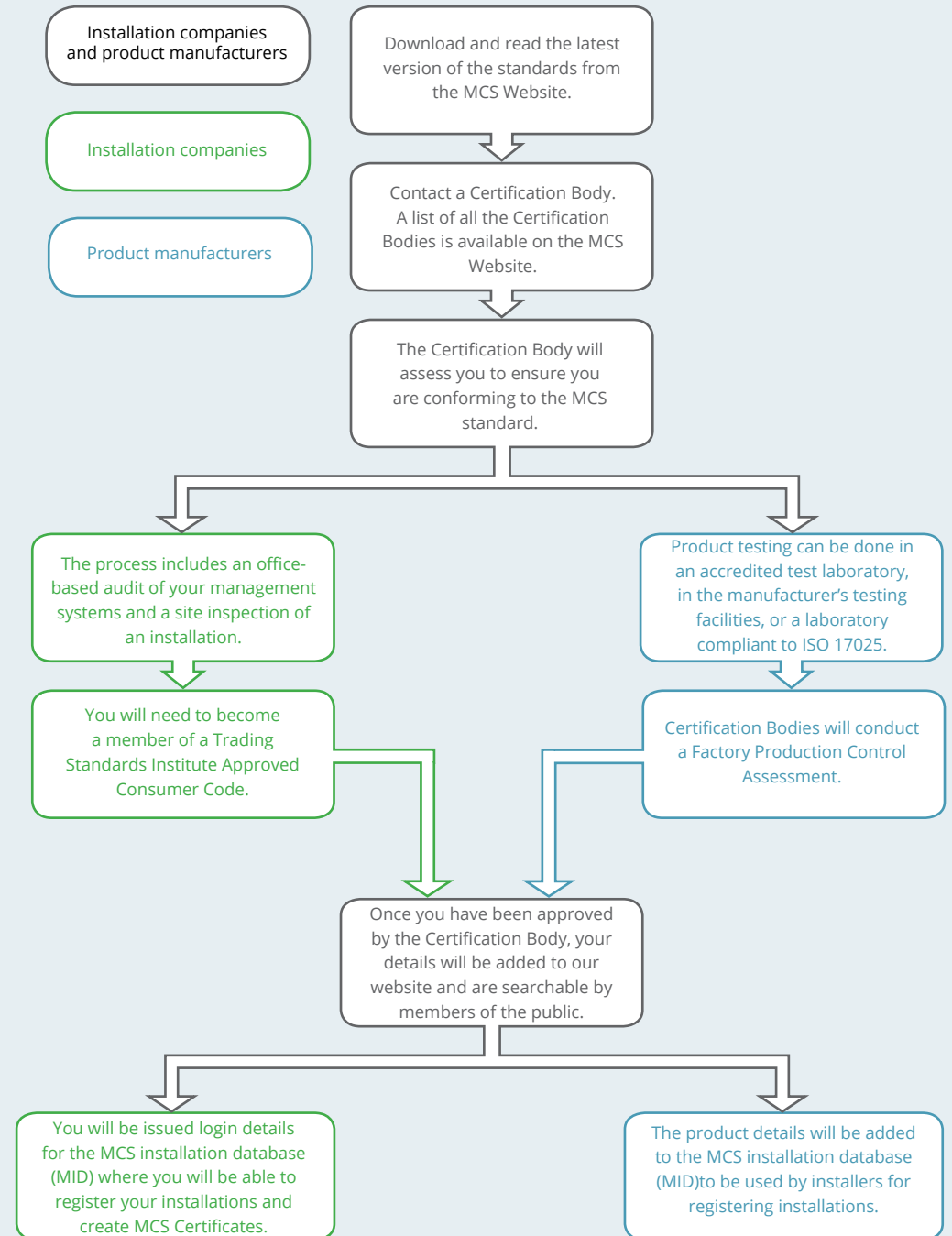
### Fees (prices shown are exclusive of VAT)

The Scheme costs for installation companies are £55 per year, plus £15 per installation to generate a MCS Certificate for the customer, with Certification Bodies having an administrative costs in addition to this. In total, you could expect to pay in the range of £500-£1000 in annual fees.

The Scheme product fees start at £425 for the first technology, with the cost decreasing for subsequent technologies.

Please contact one of the Certification Bodies directly for a more detailed breakdown of costs and timescales.

## How to become a MCS certified contractor or product manufacturer:



\*MCS Contractor refers to any installation organisation that wishes to hold MCS certification for its installation services

## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

MCS demonstrates to your customers that you install/manufacture to the industry-expected level of quality every time.

In this rapidly growing industry, contractors and products that carry the MCS Mark are likely to be seen as the preferred suppliers in the market place. This is partly because MCS is linked to key factors driving demand, such as:

- **Feed-in Tariff (FIT)**  
These will provide payments to individuals, businesses and communities for small-scale electricity generation.
- **Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI)**  
The incentive, which is the first of its kind in the world, is designed to provide financial support that encourages consumers to switch from using fossil fuel for heating to heat-led renewable technologies.



Both incentive schemes require that both the contractor and the product are certified to MCS (or an equivalent scheme) for the installation to be eligible.

Besides access to the Government's financial incentives, other benefits of the scheme include:

- **Publicity and route to market**  
A recognised brand name and consumer awareness provides a competitive advantage to MCS certified products and contractors in the marketplace.
- **Benefits to consumers**  
Quality assurance and additional consumer protection offered by MCS in conjunction with the requirement of being a member of a Chartered Trading Standards Institute approved consumer code, serve as distinctive selling points to the consumers.
- **Industry-wide recognition**  
MCS certified technologies can be used to meet the requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- **Planning permission exemptions**  
Some MCS certified products can be installed without planning permission when installed in accordance with the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO). Details on planning permission exemptions can be found on the following website: [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)

## Other Useful Organisations:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

For more information on Government policies on energy and climate change, please visit: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy)

### Ofgem

Ofgem administer a number of environmental programmes on behalf of the Government, including the application process for the domestic and non-domestic RHI schemes. For more information about Ofgem and their work, please visit [www.ofgem.gov.uk](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk)

### Energy Saving Trust/Energy Savings Advice Service

The Energy Saving Trust/Energy Savings Advice Service helps consumers and communities to save energy and reduce carbon emissions by providing direct advice on the microgeneration technologies and incentives available. For more information, please visit: [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)

### Home Energy Scotland

Home Energy Scotland help consumers by giving impartial advice on ways to reduce their energy bills. For more information, please visit: [www.greenerscotland.org/home-energy-scotland](http://www.greenerscotland.org/home-energy-scotland)

### Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI): Consumer Codes Approval Scheme (CCAS)

The CCAS is facilitated self-regulation scheme, that is managed by the Consumer Codes Approval Board (CCAB) operated by CTSI. It aims to bolster consumer protection and improve customer service standards by:


- the approval and promotion of codes of practice
- setting out the principles of effective customer service
- recognising approved traders - look for the CTSI approved code logo

For further information please visit: [www.tradingstandards.uk/advice/ConsumerCodes.cfm](http://www.tradingstandards.uk/advice/ConsumerCodes.cfm)

To find out which consumer codes are currently available, please visit: [www.microgenerationcertification.org/consumers/installation-process/the-trading-standards-institute-approval-consumer-codes](http://www.microgenerationcertification.org/consumers/installation-process/the-trading-standards-institute-approval-consumer-codes)



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