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Training Standards: Building a Competent Workforce for the Energy Transition

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1. Skills for the energy transition

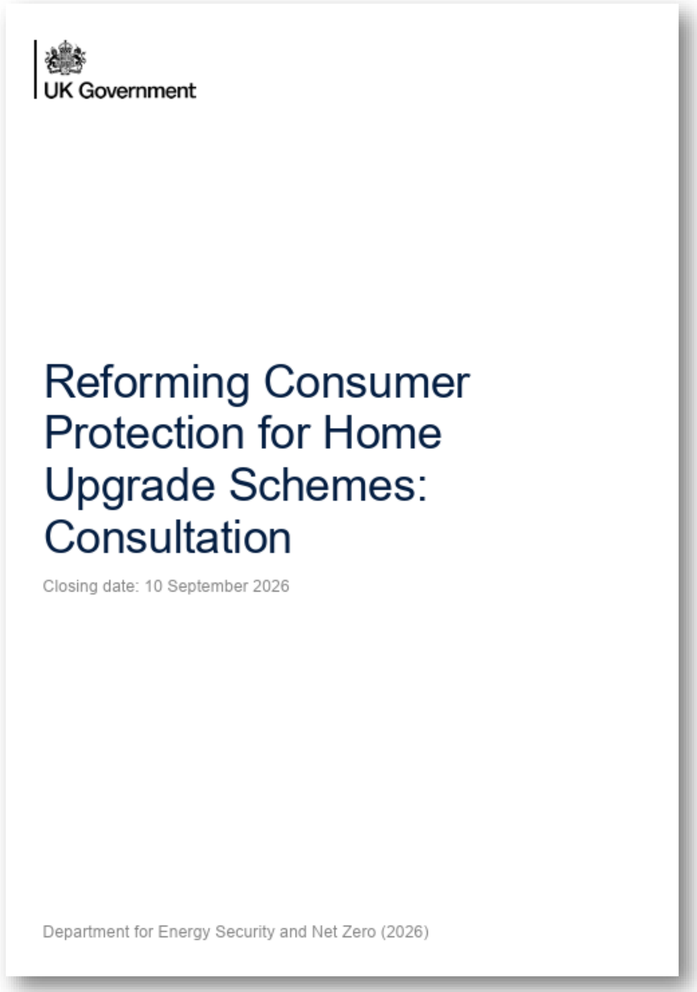
The energy transition is creating an unprecedented demand for skilled people

Government ambition to permanently lower energy bills and tackle fuel poverty by upgrading up to five million homes with energy-efficient measures and low-carbon heating by 2030

- Over 450,000 annual heat pump installations by 2030
- Triple rooftop solar PV deployment to 3 million homes by 2030
- Includes a mix of new-build homes and existing properties, supported by a £15 billion investment



1. Skills for the energy transition



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Government is changing its expectations of competence and accountability

The consultation points towards:

- Greater clarity and consistency in defining competence
- Greater accountability for individuals and organisations
- Demonstrable competence supported by assessment, evidence and ongoing assurance
- Closer integration of technical compliance, quality assurance and consumer protection

1. Skills for the energy transition

What this means for training providers

- Move beyond qualification delivery towards demonstrable competence
- Develop practical assessment that tests the application of knowledge and skills
- Support continuing professional development and the maintenance of competence
- Align training with recognised occupational and technical competence requirements
- Work more closely with industry, certification bodies and employers to ensure training reflects real-world installation requirements.

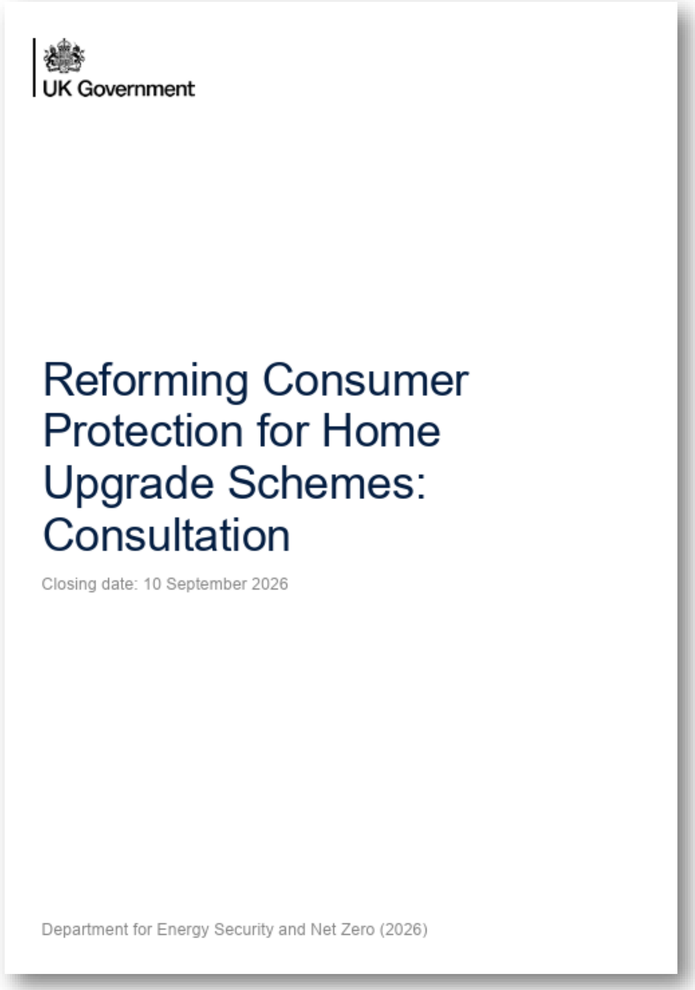


1. Skills for the energy transition

How the industry has traditionally assured quality

- Government establishes the regulatory and policy framework
- Industry schemes establish technical standards and certification requirements
- UKAS-accredited Certification Bodies assess businesses against scheme requirements
- Consumer protection and ongoing assurance are delivered through a combination of scheme and industry arrangements

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1. Skills for the energy transition

The direction of travel: greater central oversight and accountability

- Government is seeking greater control over the delivery of publicly funded programmes
- Greater consistency in technical standards, competence and quality assurance
- More direct access to installation and performance data
- Stronger oversight of certification bodies and delivery organisations
- Clearer accountability when standards are not met

UK Government

In other words, Government is seeking to move from being policy maker to becoming system architect

2. MCS competency requirements









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2. MCS competency requirements



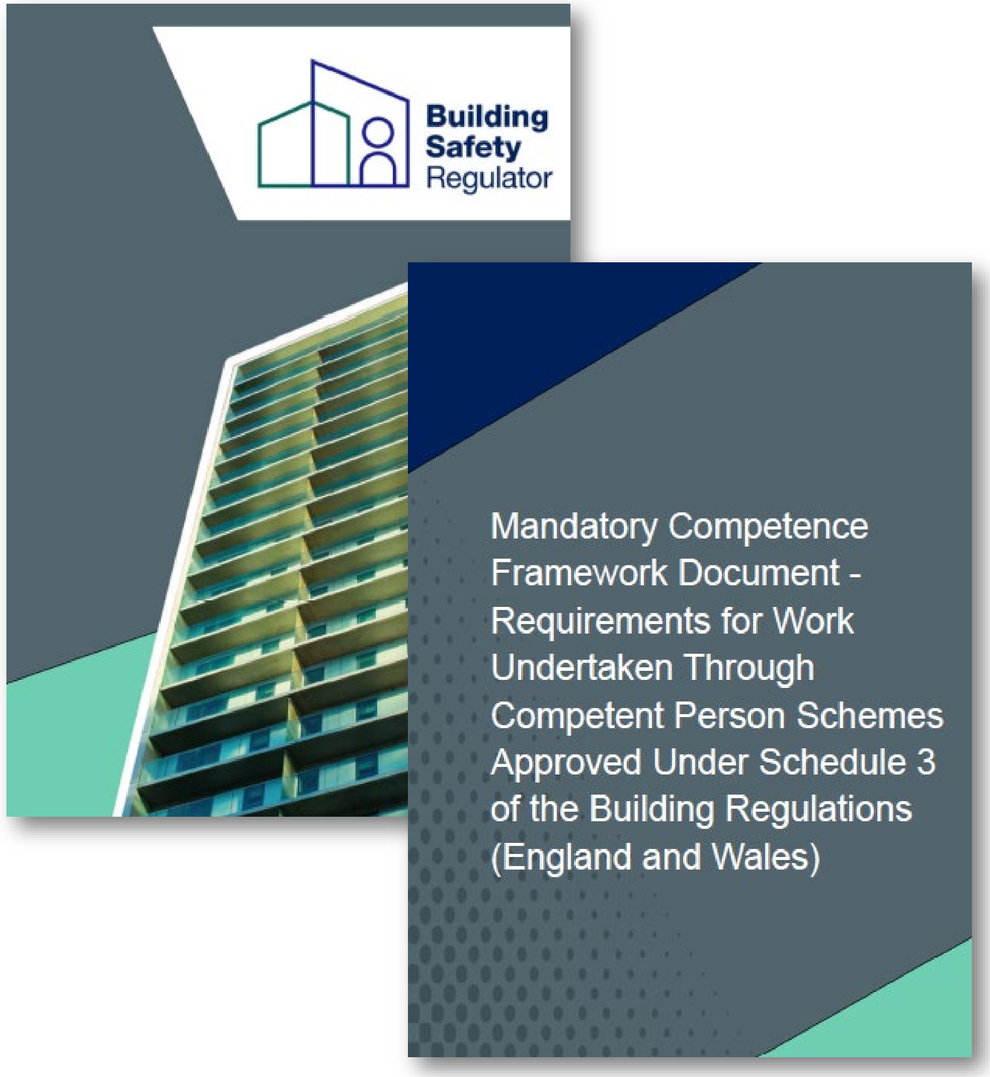
- Every installation has an identified Technical Supervisor, recorded against the installation
- Technical Supervisors must hold the appropriate in-date technology-specific qualification or personnel certification
- The installer must demonstrate that employees and subcontractors are appropriately competent and supervised
- The level of supervision must reflect the competence of the installation team and the risks associated with the work
- Technical Supervisors take responsibility for ensuring installations meet MCS standards, relevant industry requirements and manufacturer instructions

3. Mandatory Technical Competencies

What are Mandatory Technical Competencies?

- Published by the Building Safety Regulator and MHCLG on 1 July 2026
- Apply to relevant work undertaken through Government-approved self-certification schemes in England and Wales
- Define the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours required for specific regulated activities
- Include assessment, CPD and competence maintenance requirements

A common framework for defining and assessing competence in regulated work



3. Mandatory Technical Competencies

What MTCs mean in practice

- Competence is not established by qualifications alone
- Individuals must demonstrate their ability to undertake the work
- Businesses must demonstrate that they have the organisational capability and competent people to deliver it
- Scheme operators must assess, record and monitor competence
- Competence must be maintained and, where specified, revalidated



The focus shifts from what someone has been trained to do to what they can actually demonstrate they are competent to do

3. Mandatory Technical Competencies

The opportunity for training providers

- Map training and qualifications against the relevant competence requirements
- Identify and address gaps between existing qualifications and required competence
- Develop practical assessment and evidence-based learning
- Support ongoing CPD and changing technical requirements
- Work with industry to ensure training reflects real installation practices



Training providers have a critical role in building and maintaining competence, but must work as part of a wider assurance system

4. Testing Competency

Challenge the Industry faces

Transition to low-carbon heating requires thousands more competent installers, yet many experienced heating engineers are unable to enter the market

The “first install” barrier - to become MCS certified, installers typically need:

- Demonstrable heat pump installation competence
- A compliant “real” installation for audit
- Consumers reluctant for their install to be the “guinea pig”

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4. Introducing the Air Source Heat Pump installation Skills Test

A practical solution

A practical skills test for Air Source Heat Pumps designed to validate real-world competence before the first customer installation.

Developed by The Matrix Academy and NOCN, the Air Source Heat Pump practical Skills Test provides:

- A structured, hands-on assessment
- Real installation scenarios
- Commissioning, servicing and fault-finding
- Safe decommissioning and handover (a full customer explanation)
- Designed specifically to evidence installer competence in line with MCS expectations.

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Credit: The Matrix Academy

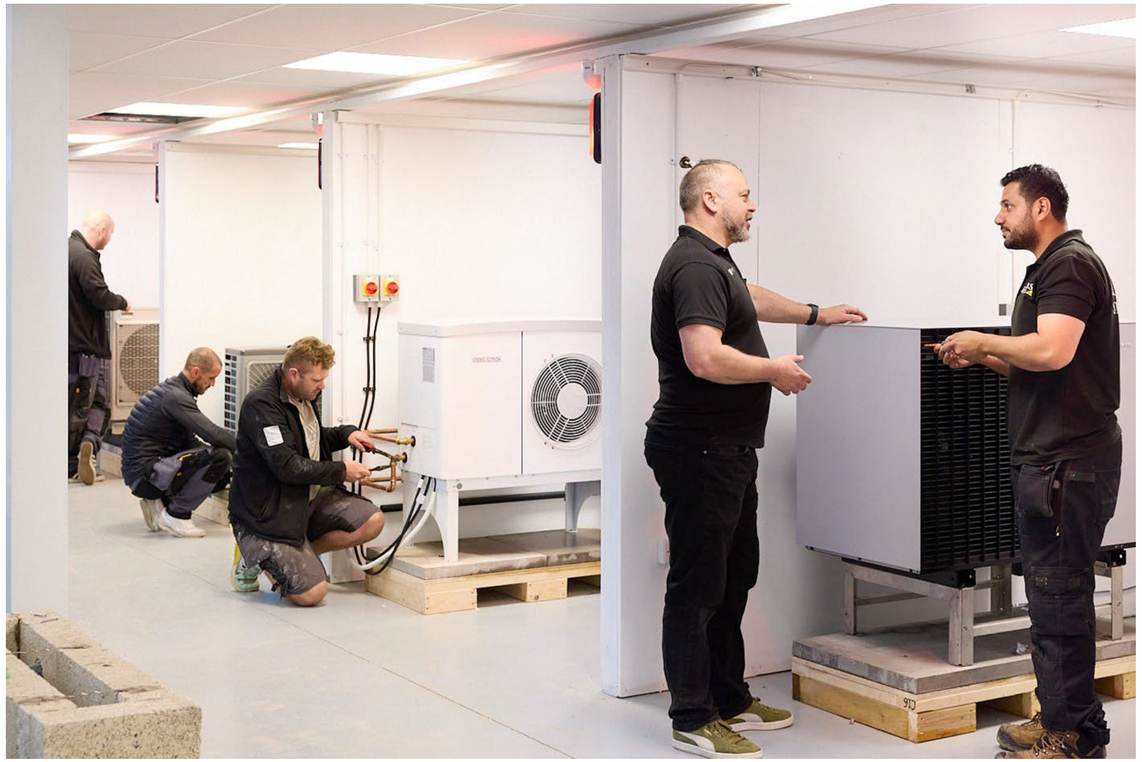
4. Introducing the Air Source Heat Pump installation Skills Test

What makes this different

- This is not a training course
- It is a competence assessment for experienced heating professionals

Key features

- 2 Day Practical Assessment
- Engineers demonstrate ability to install pipework and system components, wire and connect an ASHP, commission and test the system, diagnose faults
- All tasks take place in live test bays simulating real installations with diverse configurations



Credit: The Matrix Academy

4. Introducing the Air Source Heat Pump installation Skills Test

How It Solves the “First Install” Problem

Instead of waiting for a customer installation to prove competence, installers can demonstrate capability in a controlled environment first.

This provides:

- Evidence of practical competence
- Confidence for certification bodies
- A recognised skills benchmark
- A steppingstone to MCS certification



Credit: The Matrix Academy

4. Introducing the Air Source Heat Pump installation Skills Test

The result

- Competence proven
- Pathway into certification
- Less non-conformities
  Installer confidence
  Improved consumer understanding and confidence
  Lower energy bills
  Better brand reputation for Manufactures
  Improved industry Reputation and policy confidence



Credit: The Matrix Academy

Thank you for listening

We don't just need more installers. We need more competent installers.

The challenge for all of us is to ensure that competence is developed, demonstrated and maintained.