

How To Avoid Common Part P Assessment Issues

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When choosing to be Part P registered, the biggest fear that most contractors have is that of the assessment itself. It generates the most number of questions from contractors wanting to be sure that they will be prepared and ready for the day the assessor arrives at their front door.

ELECSA believes that the assessment shouldn't be a terrifying ordeal. The purpose of the assessment is for us to check that you are meeting the criteria of the scheme, the standards of BS7671 and the requirements of the Building Regulations. That's all it is and the assessment is always much easier when you are well prepared for the visit.

But there are typical issues that come up time and time again. This document is a summary of the years of experience we've had in assessing contractors and is intended to make you aware of where others have slipped. By being aware of the pitfalls, hopefully you won't make the same mistakes!

The assessment is broken into two sections, hence the list of common issues have been as well.

I. Office assessment

The office assessment seeks to check that you have the elementary systems and paperwork in place to provide a good service to your customers. The following is a typical list of issues that can occur:

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| Part P Warranty | This will be explained at an initial assessment and reviewed on a surveillance visit. Contractors must offer a warranty to their customers and evidence that you are doing so must be available to the assessor. If you sign up to the ECIC warranty provision provided by ELECSA, there will be no cost incurred by you. |
| Certification | A collection of adequately completed test certificates should be available for review. Care should be taken when filling in the forms to make sure they are completed correctly. Although one completed certificate (usually for the energised site assessment) is acceptable, it is recommended that as many as possible be available for review. It is important that test results are verified by the qualified person for their accuracy. |

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| Technical Library | The latest copy of BS7671 and the Onsite Guide are to be held along with a copy of the Memorandum of Guidance to the Electricity At Work Regulations 1984 HS(R) 25 (available as a free download) and Approved Document P. |
| Qualifications | Contractors will need to show proof that they have an acceptable electrical qualification i.e. a qualification recognised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority or the Scottish Qualifications Authority. If the contractor does not have a recognised 17th Edition qualification then they must book onto a suitable course within 30 days of the assessment and then after completion, issue proof of passing the course. |
| Building Regulations | The contractor must demonstrate an understanding of other building regulations applicable to the type of work undertaken. Further information and resources can be found in the ELECSA shop under books. |
| Job Notifications | On surveillance visits, all work undertaken during the previous twelve months will be checked to ensure that work which is notifiable, has been notified. |
| Public Liability | Public liability insurance of at least £2 million must be held and a certificate will need to be produced to prove that the insurance is current. |
| Test Equipment | All test meters require a current certificate of calibration or a record or regularly taken test results against a calibrated check box. If it is a new test meter, a certificate of conformity is required. |

2. Site assessment

This is an important part of the assessment in determining technical competency. The following is a list of typical technical issues that can occur:

- The installation has been energised without adequate inspection, testing and certification. This is an essential part of the wiring regulations and of the assessment.

- Lack of suitable labelling or identification e.g. on consumer units, earthing and bonding connections and switch wires etc.
- Incorrect IP rating of fixtures in bathroom zones 1 and 2 i.e. contractor has fitted a pendant type fitting in zone 2.
- IP4X not being maintained on consumer unit horizontal surface meaning objects can fall in to the consumer unit.
- Blanks missing from the front of the consumer unit meaning that there is access to live parts.
- Exposed inner single core insulation of cables at meter tails or when terminating recessed light fittings.
- Fitting of low and extra low voltage recessed lights without consideration of thermal effects and manufacturer's instructions.
- Protective bonding conductors inappropriately sized, ran and terminated. Any screw connection should be accessible this means even BS951 clamps on pipe work.

Contractors with us often find that they can get a lot out of the assessment experience for themselves when suitably prepared. Whilst the assessors are there to assess you, they can also act as a sounding board to discuss technical issues of your own. All of our assessors have at one time or another been 'on the tools' themselves so may have experiences and advice that is useful to you – use the time to your advantage!

If you have any questions about the assessment process, please contact us on **03333 218 220**.

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