

Go green with ELECSA

Guide to the Microgeneration
Certification Scheme (MCS)



Welcome to the ELECSA Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS)

In addition to our successful Part P scheme, we are now operating the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS). This is a scheme endorsed by the Department of Energy and Climate Change to assess and register companies installing microgeneration technologies.

This certification scheme provides an ongoing, independent, third party assessment for installers of microgeneration systems and technologies to ensure that the requirements of the appropriate standards are met and maintained. The assessment and certification process is detailed in section 3.

The scheme is open to any firms involved in the supply, design, installation, set to work and commissioning of microgeneration technologies:

Contents

Section 1:	The basics	2
Section 2:	ELECSA application process	3
Section 3:	Assessment and certification requirements	3
Section 4:	The assessment	4
Section 5:	Registration and using the certification marks	5
Section 6:	Maintaining ELECSA registration and costs	5

Section 1: The basics

What is Microgeneration?

The official definition of microgeneration is in The Energy Act 2004, Section 82. Essentially microgeneration is the generation of energy of up to 45 kW (heat) or up to 50kW (electricity). The term "microgeneration" is not restricted to energy generated only from renewable sources. It also covers low and zero carbon technologies.

The technologies involve the generation of electricity or heat and in some cases both, which is referred to as cogeneration.

Cogeneration technologies

- Combined Heat and Power (CHP)
- Fuel Cells

Electricity generation technologies

- Solar Photovoltaic (PV)
- Wind Turbines
- Micro Hydro

Heat generation technologies

- Solar Heating
- Heat Pumps (Ground, Air or Water Source)
- Biomass Heating

Why is Microgeneration important?

Buildings account for 47% of carbon emissions in the UK, so microgeneration has the potential to contribute to UK's challenging EU 2020 renewables and greenhouse gas targets by generating some energy from secure and reliable small-scale installations.

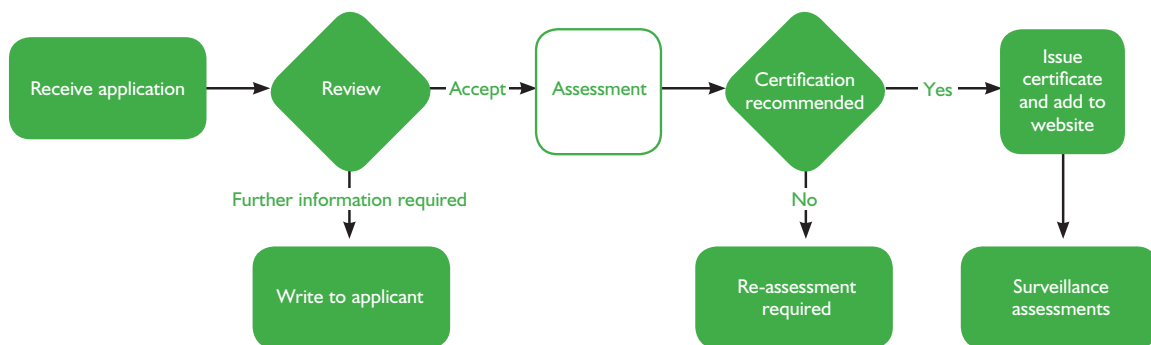
Consumer Protection

It is a scheme requirement that you are registered with a Code of Practice that meets the guidelines set by the Office of Fair Trading's (OFT's) consumer code approval scheme. This is to ensure that contractors offer consumer protection through complaints handling and comprehensive performance predictions for microgeneration installations to prevent mis-selling.

Further details about the code of practice and organisations who can offer this to you is available at:

www.microgenerationcertification.org and by clicking on the link to product manufacturers and installers.

The certification process is set out in the following chart:



Section 4: The assessment

An assessment is an objective examination of a firm and the microgeneration work that it has installed to determine the technical competence of that firm to carry out work in accordance with the relevant standard(s). Assessments use elements of questioning and observation techniques to establish competence.

The assessment will start at your office premises. The assessor will hold an opening meeting to explain the purpose of the visit, the work that is to be assessed, the reporting method, the selection of the installation site(s) to be visited and the approximate time, place and purpose of a closing meeting.

If you are able to demonstrate your competency and fulfil all of the scheme requirements, you will pass your assessment.

Office based assessment

Your policies and procedures will be assessed against the requirements of Appendix A of MCS001. This will include review of your quality plan, relevant procedures, meeting notes and records to show how you have met all 19 clauses.

Site Visit

The assessor will also need to visit installation site(s) to assess work that you have undertaken against the system design and the procedures for the installation, set to work and commissioning of the system/technology. The installation work should be adequate enough to enable an objective assessment to be made of your capabilities.

If you are concerned or have any questions about the assessment process, please contact us on 0845 634 9043.

What happens if the assessment is not successful?

If the assessor does not recommend registration, he will explain the reasons why you were not successful on the day and discuss remedial actions to enable you to become registered.

A possible reason for not passing the assessment may simply be a matter of paperwork. This scheme requires that the applicant has a quality plan covering all of their activities. This can be in the form of a document or a flow chart, but it must set out all of the activities from enquiries through to handover, and maintenance of the system.

Additionally, applicants will need to demonstrate that they have considered all 19 points from standard MCS001, have evidence of how they have applied each of the requirements and records of how they have met them.

In certain circumstances missing documentation or procedures can be forwarded to us for review. Once these are received and verified, you will have passed your assessment and your registration will be complete. However if the non-compliances are more fundamental, a full of partial re-assessment may be required.

Section 5: Registration and using the certification marks

Once the assessor's recommendation has been verified, you will be notified in writing that you have been successful and that you are now an ELECSA registered MCS contractor.

You will be allocated a username and password to access the contractor's side of the website. Here you will be able to notify your work (where appropriate), obtain further scheme information and access other benefits of the ELECSA scheme including the online shop.

Additionally you will be eligible to use the ELECSA MCS scheme mark and the government MCS Mark (subject to terms and conditions of use), to promote your registration. Your clients may also be eligible to apply for Government grants under the Low Carbon Building Programme www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/home

Section 6: Maintaining ELECSA registration and costs

Once you are registered with ELECSA, you must ensure that any proposed changes in company details; such as name, address, telephone number, email or technical personnel, are notified to us as soon as possible to ensure our contact details for you are maintained. If you change bank accounts, you must let us know immediately so that we can arrange for a new direct debit mandate to be sent out to you.

Renewal of registration

Each year, prior to the anniversary date on your registration certificate, we will advise you that your registration is due for renewal and payment of the fees via direct debit will be made (please refer to our scheme fees which are included as part of the application form).

Once payment has been received we will arrange for a surveillance visit to be conducted. This is a very similar procedure to your initial assessment visit and will involve the assessor once again assessing you against the appropriate MCS and MIS standards to ensure that you are maintaining the scheme requirements as demonstrated at your original assessment.

ELECSA fees

The scheme fees are included as part of the application form. The application form is available as either a paper form or can be downloaded from our website

www.elecsa.co.uk/microgeneration

The ELECSA shop

We are also able to provide you with a variety of books, stationery and branded items of clothing from our online shop. You can access the shop by using your online account and pay for goods and services using credit cards and even your direct debit fees.

We trust that you will find the ELECSA MCS scheme a user-friendly and efficient route to ensuring that your work meets the scheme requirements. If you need to talk to us about any aspect of the scheme, please contact the registration team on 0845 634 9043 or e-mail us at microgeneration@elecsa.co.uk

About the scheme

The Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) and Mark are owned by the government. It is designed to evaluate products and installers against robust criteria in order to provide greater protection for consumers and ensure that the government grant money is spent in an effective manner.

The aim is to:

- **Help build a rapidly growing microgeneration industry based on quality and reliability.**
- **Make a substantial contribution to cutting the UK's dependency on fossil fuels and its carbon dioxide emissions**
- **Provide consumer confidence that products and installers meet and continue to meet robust standards**
- **Grow the microgeneration industry**

Section 2: ELECSA application process

How can I register with the ELECSA Scheme?

The registration process is simple. Either complete the application form enclosed in this pack and return it to us, or visit www.elecsa.co.uk/microgeneration and complete the application online.

Once we've received your application and payment, we will allocate an assessment date. On the day of your assessment, one of our team of assessors will meet you at your premises to review your systems and policies and then accompany you to a recent installation to look at your work. Both elements of the assessment will determine if you meet the scheme requirements.

If you pass the assessment, you will be registered with the ELECSA MCS scheme. You will be listed on the ELECSA website and also able to use the ELECSA and MCS logos to promote your firm. Additionally, your clients may also be eligible to apply for Government grants under the Low Carbon Building Programme www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk/home

Additional information on the assessment process is given in section 4.

Direct Debit Mandate

In order to keep our prices low, it is a scheme requirement that all registrants pay for their annual registration fees by direct debit. A direct debit form is available to download from the website. The direct debit system can also be used to purchase branded goods and services from our online shop.

Assessment Appointment

Our registration team will process your completed application form and allocate you an assessment date. This will typically take place 4-6 weeks after receipt of your fully completed application form and direct debit mandate. However, this is a flexible system and it is possible to reschedule the assessment if it is not convenient. You should contact the scheduling office as soon as possible if you need to rearrange your appointment.

Section 3: Assessment and certification requirements

The assessment requirements are detailed in the Microgeneration Installation Standard MCS001. This document sets out in Appendix A the requirements the installer is required to meet for the office based assessment and provides general information about the assessment process.

Additionally, the following standards are technology specific and contain requirements that are assessed as part of the office and site assessments:

MIS3001 – Solar Heating

MIS3002 – Solar Photovoltaics (PV)

MIS3003 – Micro and small wind turbines

MIS3004 – Biomass

MIS3005 – Heat Pumps

MIS3007 – Combined Heat & Power (CHP)

Standards for other technologies are under development.

Links to these documents can be found on our website at www.elecsa.co.uk/microgeneration

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