

# Independent technical approvals authorities/bodies acceptable to NHBC

(June 2020) (First issue)



## Question

Which Independent Technical Approvals Authorities/Bodies are acceptable to NHBC?

## Considerations

- NHBC Technical Requirement R3 requires all materials, products and building systems to be suitable for their intended purpose
- For materials, products, or systems that are not covered by a relevant British Standard or harmonised European Standard, certification by an independent technical approvals authority acceptable to NHBC is one way of meeting technical requirement R3
- Other ways of complying include, but are not limited to, demonstration of performance in accordance with standards set by NHBC or via a European Technical Assessment (ETA) acceptable to NHBC, with these and others outlined in Chapter 2.1 of NHBC Standards
- Regulation 7 of the Approved Document in England, or its equivalent in other parts of the UK, outlines the accreditation requirements of certification bodies. This highlights the need to check the scope of the accreditation of a certification body, as the scope might cover only part of the certification body's testing or certification business. It is also essential to check that the intended application of a product is fully in accordance with that outlined in the certificate
- The structure of a home, including all elements performing critical functions are expected to have a design life of at least 60 years, unless specifically agreed in writing with NHBC
- Elements of the home used for non-critical functions may have a lesser service life in accordance with BS 7543, but not less than 15 years under any circumstances
- Modern Methods of Construction (MMC), particularly in offsite-assembled building systems that include walls, floors and roofs should demonstrate they have been assessed to provide a suitable level of performance and durability that meets with NHBC's Technical Requirements
- Products that have been assessed under an independent product certification scheme will not automatically comply with NHBC Standards and the NHBC-registered builder must ensure that the home is designed and built in accordance with the applicable NHBC Requirements.

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## Answer

Independent Technical Approvals Authorities/Bodies acceptable to NHBC are typically assessment bodies experienced in the business of conformity assessments and may be a member of the European Organisation for Technical Assessment (EOTA).

Technical Approvals Authorities/Bodies would be expected to:

- be currently accredited by a National Accreditation Body belonging to the European co-operation for Accreditation (EA), typically by UKAS in the UK, for elements performing critical functions
- certify that the material, product or system complies with national building regulations and recognised Standards, accepted by NHBC
- include a scope of assessment acceptable to NHBC. The scope of the assessment should include but not be limited to:
  - a general description of the construction product and its intended use
  - the list of essential characteristics relevant for the intended use
  - factors related to compliance with building regulations and any relevant non-regulatory information
  - site evaluation covering site preparation, delivery, handling, workmanship and installation guidance
  - initial surveillance of factory production control and continued surveillance process
  - limitations of use
  - effect of ageing and service life
  - compatibility with other elements of the construction
  - compliance with relevant NHBC Performance Standards and
  - expression of formal opinion which provides confidence in fitness for purpose.

NHBC has worked with numerous organisations, trade bodies, manufacturers and building industry bodies to help establish, assess and or recognise different certification schemes for different elements of the building structure, with critical and non-critical functions. Certification by these bodies can be used to demonstrate performance. The following are examples of the schemes that NHBC currently accepts:

- Agrément certifications by BBA and Kiwa BDA
- BRE Global certification
- BSI Kitemark schemes
- For ready mix concrete product - Kitemark or QSRMC scheme
- For wood products & systems - BM Trada - Q Mark certification
- For Glassfibre Reinforced Plastic (GRP) products - Agrément or CGFMA certification
- For Insulated Glass Units - See list of accepted certifications on our Technical Guidance Note 6.7/16
- For curtain walling and cladding systems - Agrément or WinMark certification.