

Certified Contractors Scheme

Setting the benchmark for excellence

The Certified Contractor Scheme recognises the professional competence of those fencing contractors, who fulfil basic registration criteria and meet minimum standards for training, quality and continual improvement.

The four levels of certification are:



Each certification level requires evidence that the contractor fulfils the stated criteria, which reflects the breadth, size and complexity of fencing projects. These will range from residential installations (yellow), to those complex, technical or logistically difficult installations covered by National Highways Sector Schemes (blue).

Certification Levels

Criteria	Levels of Certification			
	General	Commercial	Major Projects	Specialist
Basic Criteria:				
1. Evidence of a minimum of two years trading	✓	✓	✓	✓
2. Evidence of annual turnover of more than £75,000	✓	✓	✓	✓
3. Two positive contract references OR ISO 9001 Quality Management Certification	✓	✓	✓	✓
Additional Criteria:				
4. Insurances:				
Employer and Public Liability Insurance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contractors' All Risk Insurance		✓	✓	✓
5. Health & Safety - SSIP / OHSASS18001		✓	✓	✓
6. FISS/CSCS Evidence		✓	✓	✓
7. AFI Meeting Attendance / CPD Evidence		✓	✓	✓
8. ISO 9001 QMS Accreditation			✓	✓
9. Accreditation Evidence:				
National Highways Sector Schemes OR Achilles UVDB				✓

Basic Criteria:

1. Evidence of a minimum of two years trading.
2. Evidence of annual turnover of more than £75,000
3. Two positive references from relevant contract work completed within the preceding 12 months (as at 1st January last), and required with each Annual Return OR assessed and accredited to ISO 9001 – Quality Management by any UKAS approved Certification body.

Additional Criteria:

4. Employer, Public Liability and Contractors' All Risk insurance
5. Evidence of a Health & Safety – accreditation to any scheme included in the current approved schemes SSIP (Safety Schemes in Procurement eg CHAS) see <http://www.ssip.org.uk/> for more information or OHSAS18001
6. Evidence that a minimum 50 per cent of the company employees engaged in fencing works hold current FISS / CSCS cards (list of card holders to be provided)
7. Attendance within the preceding 12 months at a minimum of one AFI meeting (or relevant industry seminar / workshop) evidencing a commitment to Continual Professional Development (CPD)
8. Evidence of current ISO 9001 Quality Management System Accreditation
9. Evidence of accreditation (as at 1st January last) to at least one relevant National Highways Sector Scheme (e.g. 2A, 2B, 2C) achieved as additional scope to the ISO 9001 Quality Management System as above OR registration to Achilles UVDB Verify under a fencing category with minimum scores for the assessment areas as follows:

Management System Evaluation	Minimum Score	Onsite Assessment	Minimum Score
Health and safety	70%	Health and safety	70%
Environment	70%	Environment	70%
Quality	70%	Quality	70%

What are the benefits?

Clients

Identifying suitably qualified fencing contractors, who hold the require industry accreditations and training, has until now, been something of a challenge for public and commercial clients.

The Certified Contractor Scheme provides:

- Easy access to technically competent and appropriately qualified fencing contractors, who hold the requisite skills and wider professional accreditations for specific projects. By simply referring to the list on this website specifiers, procurement officers and commercial and domestic clients can view the profiles of contractors certified to the required level;
- Benchmarking of contractor competence so that specifiers in the public and commercial sectors need only state in their tenders the level of AFI certification required, knowing that contractors with the certification will have fulfilled the appropriate technical, health and safety and regulatory criteria to the satisfaction of the AFI;
- Peace of mind, particularly for residential clients who can be reassured that basic technical and professional criteria have been met when they select an AFI Certified Contractor, removing the risk of employing tradesmen without the requisite skills.

This in turn means:

- Making specification and tender preparation easier
- Specifiers in the public and commercial sectors need only state in their tenders the level of AFI certification required.
- Capability to search the AFI website where the company profiles and accreditations will be listed under the appropriate level of certification.

Contractors

In tough market conditions with increasingly discerning customers, fencing contractors need a competitive edge to help them stand out from the crowd. By achieving AFI Certified Contractor status, contractors benefit from:

- Use of the AFI Certified Contractor logo on letterheads, stationery, website, vehicles and marketing material, which is a powerful marketing tool;
- Wide scale promotion of the scheme and the AFI Certified Contractor listing on the AFI website, explaining the technical expertise, professionalism and regulatory compliance required of certified contractors, to specifiers, procurement officers and public/commercial clients in the major sectors, including:
 - Government departments, e.g. Ministry of Defence and Home Office
 - Highways Agency
 - Utilities companies
 - Airport authorities
 - Network Rail
 - House builders
 - Local authorities
- Scheme marketing material for inclusion with tenders and for prospecting;
- Increased business opportunities as tenders increasingly specify AFI Certified Contractor status as a pre-qualification requirement and residential clients look for peace of mind in choosing a reputable and competent contractor;
- Specifiers, procurement officers and clients (commercial and residential) can search for a fencing contractor, certified at the level appropriate to the contract.

Who can join?

The scheme is open to any fencing contractor who can meet the following basic criteria required for membership of the AFI, although membership of the association is not required by the scheme:

- The company must have traded for a minimum of two years
- It must have an annual turnover of more than £75,000
- It must provide two positive contract references
- It must provide proof of valid Employer and Public Liability Insurance
- The company must agree to subsequently provide an Annual Return, updating company information and turnover.