



# Building safety competence information for principal contractors and principal designers

- Competency standard PAS 8671:2022
- Competency standard PAS 8672:2022

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# Building safety competence information for principal contractors and principal designers

This document is for principal designers (PDs) and principal contractors (PCs) appointed by clients to undertake design work and building work<sup>1</sup> in England. It aims to help principal designers and PCs understand the building safety competencies (skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours) and the organisational capability they need to carry out their roles. It will also assist clients making principal designer and principal contractors appointments.

## Competency standard PAS 8671 and 8672

This document provides a summary of the contents of the British Standard Publicly Available Specification (PAS):

- 8671:2022 Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Designers – Specification
- 8672: 2022 Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Contractors – Specification

These PAS outline the expected skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours and ethics, additional competences for higher-risk buildings (HRBs) and limits of competence for principal designers and principal contractors.

It is important to note those taking on the principal designers or principal contractors role cannot rely solely on this guidance and may wish to read PAS 8671 and 8672 or obtain training that aligns with PAS 8671 and 8672.

### Scope of this information

The roles and proposed related duties of the Principal Designer and Principal Contractor dutyholders which are based on the preliminary policy intention to establish these roles and duties in building regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> This does not include exempt work under the Building Regulations 2010 and work listed in Schedule 4 to the Building Regulations 2010 when carried out by a person on their own dwelling (but note that the requirements of the Building Regulations 2010 would continue to apply to such work)

A summary of the competence requirements for individuals who take on the Principal Designer and Principal Contractor roles as outlined in PAS 8671 and 8672

It does not cover the health and safety competence requirements set out in the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015). Information on skills, knowledge, experience and training for CDM 2015 can be found on hse.gov.uk at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/index.htm>

### **Principal designer**

A building regulations principal designer can be an individual or an organisation. They are a designer in control of the design work, and can be, for example:

- an architect
- an engineer (structural and others)
- a surveyor

### **Principal contractor**

A building regulations principal contractor can also be an individual or an organisation. A principal contractor is a contractor in control of the building work, and can be, for example:

- a construction company
- an individual contractor

### **Appointing a principal designer and contractor**

A client will need to appoint a principal designer and principal contractor to any building project that is likely to have more than one contractor.

If a client fails to appoint anyone, principal designer and principal contractor responsibilities are retained by the client. For domestic clients (not part of a business activity), principal designer and principal contractor duties pass onto the designer and contractor most in control of these phases.

Client, principal designer and principal contractor can be the same person or organisation if they have the appropriate competencies. As clients will often bring in others to take on principal designer and principal contractor role, clients must take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the PD and PC has the necessary competence.

Clients should also consider the principal designer and principal contractor history in relation to any previous enforcement action.

A principal designer and principal contractor appointed under CDM 2015 can also be appointed as the principal designer and principal contractor roles for building regulations if competent to do so.

## **Behaviour and ethics**

Principal designers and principal contractors should have high levels of personal integrity. This includes being honest about the limits of their own competence and refusing to carry out work which is beyond this (or asking for assistance). They should never accept non-complaint design or building work.

## **Principal Designer - Summary of PAS 8671 competence**

The Building Regulations principal designer (PD) must plan, manage monitor design work, and cooperate, coordinate and communicate to ensure the design work, if built, complies with building regulations.

It is important that the principal designer is part of the design team and not a third-party without any influence over design decisions.

The principal designer should be able to co-ordinate the design team. It may help the principal designer to keep a record of designers and their responsibilities across a project.

A principal designer is not expected to be an expert in every design specialism, but they are expected to know enough about the building regulations to assess whether a building design will comply with all relevant regulations.

principal designers should support others, for example, in being able to pass on necessary information to contractors and explain to them how to demonstrate that elements are built properly.

## **Summary of the competence for all buildings**

### ***Legislative and regulatory framework for compliance***

Understanding the law (role and competency requirements set out in the Building Regulations) as this will enable the principal designer to understand their role.

### ***Management of design work compliance***

Be able to manage other designers and reach consensus that design work is compliant with building regulations. Monitor identified compliance risks and assess gaps in other designers' competences.

The PAS 8671 describes 'management' as:

- a) setting the plan for achieving design work compliance

- b) controlling changes to the plan and monitor risks to design work compliance
- c) coordinating designers' work related to achieving the plan
- d) liaising with principal contractors about design work compliance
- e) monitoring progress against the plan through to the end of the design phase

### ***Technical framework for compliance***

Principal designer should understand technical guidance, codes of practice and standards so that they can assess, challenge, and build design team consensus on design compliance.

Additional competency expectations are required for higher-risk buildings, refer to the full PAS 8671:2022 for details. Available from <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/industries-and-sectors/construction-and-the-built-environment/built-environment-competence-standards/pas-8671/>

## **Principal Contractor - Summary of PAS 8672 competence**

The Building Regulations Principal Contractor (PC) must plan, manage and monitor the building work, cooperate, coordinate and communicate to ensure the building work complies with building regulations.

The principal contractor is expected to take responsibility for their site. principal contractors should manage the flow of information and make sure it gets to those who need it.

Principal contractors are expected to work with designers and other contractors to make sure all building work complies with relevant building regulations.

Monitoring is frequently overlooked. A principal contractor should have arrangements to monitor building work (and record this) to make sure it complies with the law and to liaise with the principal designer to agree any changes.

### **Summary of the competence for all buildings**

#### ***Legal and contractual requirements in relation to the discharge of their duties***

Ability to understand applicable legislation and recognise obligations regarding building safety.

#### ***Managing building work***

Competency to manage building including knowledge of risks (fire and structural safety) and how to mitigate these.

### ***Planning and organising production***

The necessary competence to select competent contractors and suppliers. Competence to procure quality materials, products and building systems.

### ***Managing construction processes/production***

Ability to coordinate and monitor contractors, suppliers and service providers, specifically:

- identification, assessment, inspection and testing of safety critical materials, components and building systems.
- ensuring any time or budgetary pressures do not impact building safety

### ***Leadership, decision making and change management***

Competency to lead a building project using learning, experiences, and knowledge of standards and best practice. Principal contractor will be able to take control of a build and manage change control but also delegate and empower others.

### ***Liaising with the Client, other stakeholders and regulatory bodies***

Develop a trusting, open and honest relationship with the key parties (Client, Principal Designer, Regulator)

### ***Developing people and teams***

Define the competencies required on a project and develop others to address any gaps.

### ***Managing the quality of building work***

Competencies to effectively manage build quality through communicating with and monitoring contractor's work. Principal contractor will also then need competencies to recognise and manage alterations or deviations

### ***Managing information***

Competency to retain accurate and reliable documented information. In most cases, this will necessitate the competency to develop digital systems for the build information management.

Additional competency expectations are required for higher-risk buildings, refer to the full PAS 8672:2022 for details. Available at <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/industries-and-sectors/construction-and-the-built-environment/built-environment-competence-standards/pas-8672/>



## Organisations

PAS standards 8671 and 8672 are aimed at individual principal designers and principal contractors, however many principal designers and principal contractors will be organisations.

An organisational principal designer and principal contractor must nominate a 'designated individual' to manage its functions. The designated individual should possess the competencies outlined in the PAS.

Organisations must ensure their workforce has the skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours for their roles. The PAS can help businesses assess the competence of the individuals working for them.

Organisations must have the necessary 'organisational capability'. This requires them to actively monitor and supervise their people, whilst also providing sufficient time and resources to do the job.

'Plan, Do, Check, Act: An Introduction to Managing Health and Safety INDG275' available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg275.htm> may help organisations implement organisational capability.

## How to demonstrate and assess competence

It is important to note that compliance with PAS 8671 or 8672 (or any other standard) does not guarantee meeting all legal obligations.

The PAS competencies may however help confirm that the organisations or individuals have the necessary competence to perform their roles so long as credible evidence can be provided.

Competence can be demonstrated through:

- formal training (for example, to increase your knowledge about fire and structural safety)
- experience (for example, in identifying and managing building safety risks (fire and structural safety) in higher-risk buildings)
- knowledge (for example, the law and operational practices needed to plan, monitor, and control building safety in higher-risk buildings).

Trade associations, professional bodies, sector training providers and awarding bodies may be able to support the improvement, demonstration and validation of expected skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours of principal designers and contractors. Ultimately, they should be able to evidence how their skills, knowledge and experience meet or are equivalent to those in the PAS.





## Further information

For information about health and safety, or to report inconsistencies or inaccuracies in this guidance, [visit the HSE website \(www.hse.gov.uk\)](http://www.hse.gov.uk). You can order HSE priced publications at the [HSE Books Website \(https://books.hse.gov.uk\)](https://books.hse.gov.uk).

HSE priced publications are also available from bookshops.

This publication is not currently available at [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

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