



Principal Duty Holder & Qualified Supervisor roles and responsibilities

This is intended to provide guidance to Principal Duty Holders (PDH) & Qualified Supervisors (QS) to ensure the adequate supervision of electrical work undertaken by your business.

The PDH is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the business carries out work in accordance with the relevant standards, including the issue of appropriate certificates or inspection reports for all electrical work carried out
- Ensuring that the business undertakes the work activity in compliance with all relevant statutory requirements
- Ensuring that any persons undertaking electrical work receive any necessary training
- Ensuring that all electrical work is assigned to the business's QS(s) and ensuring sufficient QS's are employed to effectively manage and supervise electrical work
- Ensuring that where a QS ceases to be employed in that capacity, the PDH will notify NICEIC within 30 days.

Also the PDH will need to have an understanding of and, be responsible for, the health and safety and other statutory requirements relating to the electrical work being undertaken by the business.

Failure to comply with the requirements and responsibilities of the scheme rules may lead to the business being suspended and / or cancellation of certification.

The QS is responsible for:

- Ensuring results of the verification process are accurately recorded on the appropriate certificates or inspection report
- Undertaking supervisory duties of employed persons to ensure they are competent and adequately supervised
- Having adequate knowledge, experience and understanding of the design, construction, maintenance, verification and/or inspection and testing procedures for electrical work
- Having adequate knowledge of applicable Building Regulations and Standards where relevant.

The QS's fundamental responsibility lies with the quality and compliance of the day-to-day work of the business. It should be noted that this responsibility may affect the amount of time the QS is engaged directly in electrical work and therefore additional QS's may be required.

The importance of the role of the QS and the adequacy of the supervision in the overall process of ensuring that the electrical work is compliant can, in some instances, be disregarded through worker ignorance and/or ineptitude regarding the knowledge, attitude, skills and time required to do the job.

The responsibilities of the QS should be clearly stated by the PDH and consideration should be given to stating these responsibilities in writing.

The level of supervision necessary for electrical work undertaken by the business will be determined by the level of competence of each operative with regard to the risks involved in the work they are being instructed to undertake.

Where the risks involved are low, verbal instructions are likely to be adequate but as the risk or complexity increase there is a point where the need for written procedures become important to ensure that instructions may be understood and supervised more rigorously.

In this context, supervision does not necessarily require continual attendance at the work site but the degree of supervision and the manner in which it is exercised is for the PDH and QS to arrange to ensure that danger, or injury, is prevented.

The following tabulated information will assist and guide the PDH and QS to ensure that all work is adequately supervised. Supervision only applies where there is a QS and 'employed persons' carrying out the electrical work.

IMPORTANT- The tables below are guidance and ultimately it is the responsibility of the business to determine the competence and complexity of task undertaken by each operative.

Table1: Level of operative supervised

Operative level	Guidance
Level 1	Operatives would be Instructed persons (electrically) who would generally be apprentices, labourers, electrician's mates or electrical improvers - and who under the supervision of a Skilled person (electrically) , could be able to install wiring systems. Others that fall within this category are career changers who may have training and/or qualifications but lack experience.
Level 2	Operatives would be Instructed persons (electrically) who are experienced, trusted electrical installers who can carry out electrical installation work efficiently and in accordance with the current BS 7671 and Building Regulations/Standards. Therefore they can be expected mostly to work without the need of close and detailed supervision.
Level 3	Operatives would be considered as Skilled persons (electrically) who possess practical, theoretical and electrical engineering skills, experience and knowledge with adequate technical supervisory experience comparable to that of QS.

Table 2: Degree of risk in the electrical installation work

Installation work examples	(NOTE: The business will be responsible for judging the degree of risk, this table is provided for Guidance)	Degree of risk
Electrical work where the installation is isolated when not under the control of the installer e.g. ■ First fix electrical installation work ■ Second fix electrical installation work		Low
Electrical work defined in BS 7671 as Minor Works in an unoccupied building – subject to safe isolation procedures documented and implemented		Low
Electrical work defined in BS 7671 as Minor Works in an occupied building – subject to safe isolation procedures documented and implemented		Medium
All other Electrical installation work including that covered by relevant Building Regulations and Technical Handbooks.		High
Electrical work – Periodic Inspection and Testing		High

Table 3: Risk factor

Level of operative supervised (From Table 1)	Level 1 Operative (instructed person: apprentice, improver, electrician's mate)			
	Level 2 Operative (instructed person: experienced, trusted)			
	Level 3 Operative (skilled person: equivalent to QS without role or qualification)			
		Low risk	Medium risk	High risk
Degree of risk in the installation (From Table 2)				

Table 4: Degree of Supervision

Risk	Nature of instruction to operative	Minimum required competence of Inspector*	Involvement of QS on site
	Verbal	Satisfying the definition of a Skilled Person (electrically)	Remote
	Written		Periodic
	Written		Close and detailed

It is recognised that the person responsible for carrying out the initial verification or periodic inspection, testing and certification of the installation may not be the registered QS. The person shall hold an appropriate qualification or be able to demonstrate equivalent competence. All Employed Persons undertaking Periodic Inspection and Testing will require the appropriate Inspection and Testing Qualification.