

Outline of proposed accreditation arrangements for Utility Connection Providers

1 Background

In line with the Commission's consultation on the further development of the retail market, Scottish Water has confirmed it will implement an accreditation arrangement to allow accredited entities known as Utility Connection Providers (UCPs) to carry out connections to its public supply water network.

The purpose of this brief is to outline Scottish Water's thinking on the approach to the requirements of the accreditation arrangement. It should be noted this document represents current thinking and the approach will be adapted and modified in the light of further review and comments.

2 Concept

Scottish Water's thinking as to how the new arrangements will be structured is as follows;

- Scottish Water would set up an accreditation scheme and accredit companies in line with that scheme. Accreditation may also be withdrawn.
- Entities applying for connection to Scottish Water's network, whether developers, Licensed Providers or other entities, and, assuming the application has the necessary Technical Approvals and other agreements from Scottish Water, will be able to appoint a UCP to undertake the connection activity.
- The UCP will undertake the work in line with the requirements of the accreditation arrangements. The contractual relationship for the connection work will be between the applicant for the connection, eg the developer or the Licensed Provider, and the UCP.
- Scottish Water's contract for the work done will be with the applicant for the connection. That would mean that should there be a need for redress in the case of any work not meeting relevant technical standards or other requirements, Scottish Water's redress would be to the applicant, ie the developer or the Licensed Provider. Scottish Water would expect the applicant to make the necessary contractual arrangements with the UCP to reflect that position, backing off requirements and liabilities as appropriate.
- The necessary information flows and responsibilities associated with the operation of the arrangement will need to be detailed. As a matter of principle, it seems logical that information flows relating to specific connections will need to come from the applicant to Scottish Water, not from the UCP to Scottish Water.
- In the case of metered properties to be connected, typically non-household properties, arrangements for those should be consistent with market arrangements for metered properties. Further consideration will be given to how these are best aligned.

As a consequence of the above, current thinking is that the existing application arrangements will need to be reviewed, to ensure that all relevant information is provided to and from Scottish Water, as well as the existing contractual arrangements in respect of the connection activity. The subsequent flows of information to and from Scottish Water will also need to be reviewed.

3 Operation of the accreditation arrangement

Scottish Water currently operates the existing scheme for Self-Lay Organisations (SLOs). With the expansion of this kind of accreditation activity, it is appropriate to review alternative options to support the operation of the scheme. As part of that, we have been reviewing the procedures in place in England and Wales, including the scope for working with Lloyds Register Group, who operate on behalf of water utility companies in England, the Water Industry Registration Scheme (WIRS). Scottish Water has commenced discussions with Lloyds to understand the implications of such an arrangement. The accreditation scheme will be audited and monitored.

4 Accreditation arrangements

The proposed accreditation arrangements will draw on existing arrangements operated by Scottish Water. There is a need additionally to consider the requirements for information exchange, supporting processes and timing of information flows. As noted above, the information here reflects current thinking and is not the definitive proposal.

The list below covers the anticipated training standards and bodies to which Scottish Water would expect a UCP to be registered, to ensure Health & Safety standards and safe working practices while working on Scottish Water's public network. The criteria will be indicated as either mandatory or desired, with current expectations indicated in the table below.

Accreditation factor	Criteria	Mandatory or Desired
Capability	Training modules for self connect (See information at Annex 1 on current modules.)	Mandatory
Achilles	Supplier on the utilities vendor data base/Multiple Categories.	Mandatory
ISO9000		Mandatory
Lloyds Register	Several current schemes	Under review
Utility Network	SBGI Utility Networks Division	Mandatory
Lloyds Register Quality Assurance Ltd (LRQA)	Provision of Civil Engineering Construction and maintain services principle in utility transportation, Energy and infrastructure sections, Planning and construction of residential dwellings. Provision of plant services	Mandatory

Certain requirements will need to be supported by UCPs and these will be included within the accreditation framework, including;

- A duty to prevent unplanned interruptions to the public supply and to work within the procedures to ensure that existing customers are provided with appropriate notice.
- Provision of information on all planned activity on the network to Scottish Water, such that it can keep its Operations Log updated at all times. This log is also the basis for advising household customers and Licensed Providers of activities on the network.
- A requirement for a high level of competency in this field which can be demonstrated according to the accreditation criteria. It may be that companies would be accredited for certain types of connections only, recognising that larger diameter connection types require different competencies compared to lower diameter connections.
- A requirement to have in place liability insurance.
- Adherence with Scottish Water's Distribution Operational Maintenance Strategy (DOMS) requirements and procedures. In this regard and to take an example, if a UCP is laying mains within the site that is to be connected, the post sample will be carried out by Scottish Water. Consistent with DOMS, the UCP will be required to submit a method statement to obtain formal consent to work on any strategic or Part 3 infrastructure, in addition to an Impact Assessment Form (IAF). It would be the responsibility of the UCP to give Scottish Water 20 business day notification before carrying out a connection. A copy of the road open permit, impact assessment form and any testing certification need to be presented at the time of notification.

The references above to information requirements have been set out as examples of Scottish Water's requirements. Some or all of the information may need to come via the applicant for the connection, ie the Licensed Provider or the developer, rather than directly from the UCP.

The specific requirements to be adhered to in making the connection will depend on the size of the connection, materials and all the other criteria set out in the documentation. Scottish Water may be present at connections.

All existing documentation, eg DOMS material, will be reviewed to ensure the information provided covers the new requirements and eventualities.

Scottish Water
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Annex 1 List of current self-lay training modules

Below are details for the six Self Lay Modules offered at the moment through Develop Training.
The website address is www.developtraining.co.uk

Module 1 - Fusion Jointing of Mains and Services

This course covers fusion jointing of polyethylene pipes using butt fusion and electro fusion methods. It is intended to provide the skills and knowledge necessary to join polyethylene pipe safely using butt fusion and electro fusion techniques. (This course used to include registration with EU Skills for the Water Hygiene card; this is no longer the case as the majority of people attending Module 1 now have the card).

Module 2 - Ductile Iron Mains

This course covers basic skills in identification, cutting, laying and jointing of ductile iron mains. It is intended to provide the skills and knowledge necessary to cut, lay and join ductile iron pipes by a variety of methods.

Module 3 - Testing and Disinfection of Mains

This course covers testing of MDPE and ductile iron water mains together with the procedures for disinfecting new mains. It is intended to test the skills and knowledge necessary to pressure test and disinfect new mains.

Module 4 - Plastic Pipe Systems (Mechanical and push-fit)

This course covers laying and jointing of plastic pipe systems using mechanical and push-fit joints. Installation of polyethylene services using self-tapping connections.

Module 5 - Service Connections - Ductile Iron Mains

This course covers drilling and tapping of iron mains with installation of copper service pipes.

A new course will be introduced, **Module 6 - Barrier Pipe**. This will be a 1-day conversion course for everyone who has already qualified through Module 1 - Fusion Jointing of Mains and Services. It will cover jointing of polyethylene barrier pipe to manufacturer's instructions, using a range of joints including approved fittings.

All of the above have City and Guilds certification.