

## Accreditation scheme developed for competent roofers

**There is a new qualification for roofing contractors who want to demonstrate their competence.**

The National Federation of Roofing Contractors (NFRC) has developed the RoofCERT accreditation programme to give roofers a badge of competency and professionalism.

The first of nine roofing disciplines that will be accredited under the national scheme is the technical competency test for slating and tiling. Others will follow on. The idea is that the scheme will help combat the cowboys, chancers and rogue traders operating in the roofing trade.

RoofCERT's accreditation and standards activity group – which is made up of the NFRC, the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), contractors, suppliers, and training providers – have spent the past few months devising a bank of questions that best demonstrate the technical ability of slaters and tilers.

The 40-minute multiple-choice test consists of 35 questions, which are based on the BS 5534 code of practice and cover the tasks involved in slating and tiling, such as batten gauges for natural slate and fire-stops.

Following a pilot period over the coming months, the online technical competency test will be carried out at test centres across the UK and will become the lynchpin of the RoofCERT national roofing accreditation. It will be open to roofing installers in all disciplines with or without vocational qualifications. Installers with a national or Scottish vocational qualification wishing to become accredited roofers must have at least three years' practical experience in the discipline and also have passed their CITB health & safety test. Installers without vocational qualifications but have five years' practical experience can submit evidence of their skills and experience and have one-to-one interviews with skills evaluators.

In addition to passing the technical competency test, installers are also expected to complete short courses on Working At Height, Asbestos Awareness, Abrasive Wheels, Manual Handling, Fire Safety and Emergency First Aid.

Accreditation must be renewed every three years. There is CITB funding to accredit 5,000 roofers by 2021, at which time the scheme is expected to be self-funding.

Richard Miller, NFRC's head of qualification and standards, said: *"The development of the technical competency test for slating & tiling is a significant milestone in the delivery of the RoofCERT accreditation scheme, which could be a game-changer for our industry. Working with our partners, we have developed a robust test that demonstrates the technical ability according to the latest standards and best practice for all those that pass it."*

*"The technical competency test is a crucial component of the RoofCERT national roofing accreditation scheme, which will provide individual roofers with visible proof of their roofing skills so that they stand out from those rogue traders that give us a bad name."*