



# **“Working Towards” Development Process: ATLAS Contractor**

**Version 3.0 January 2025**

# “Working Towards” Development Process – CONTRACTOR



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## INTRODUCTION

This guidance document has been written to inform contractors about becoming ATLAS Contractor Members if they do not fulfil all the membership criteria in the application. Appropriate ATLAS staff will use the development process to measure and report on the “Working Towards” member journey.

This guidance should be read in conjunction with.

- ATLAS Members Code of Conduct
- ATLAS Membership Terms and Conditions
- ATLAS “Working Towards” Procedure and
- ATLAS Audit Procedure











The Development Process has been broken down into simple steps. This should make it easier for a “Working Towards” member to follow and provide ATLAS with a framework for monitoring progress. The process starts from a fundamental level, going from application as a “Working Towards” Member to full Contractor Membership. Therefore, some of the steps in this process may not be relevant to all applicants.

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## DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The diagram below outlines the key steps in the Development Process

- 1  Apply to become a “Working Towards” Contractor Member confirming compliance with registration, evidence of operating and appropriate levels of insurance
- 2  Planning Meeting
- 3  Approval as “Working Towards” Member
- 4  Accident and Life Policies
- 5  CITB Registration
- 6 SSIP Accreditation
- 7  Training and Certification
- 8  Compliance with ATLAS recognised standards
- 9  Project Documentation
- 10  Contractor Audit & Contractor Membership

# “Working Towards” Development Process – CONTRACTOR



## 1. Apply to become a “Working Towards” Member

Prospective members can apply for ATLAS Membership after reading and understanding this development process and all the documents referenced in the Introduction section. Details of the application process can be found on our website. Alternatively, our Member Services team can provide advice and assistance where required.

Our Member Services team receives and processes applications. They verify the information contained in them, which may require phone calls, meetings, virtual meetings, or a site visit to the applicant.

The appropriate ATLAS staff will then verify the application. The applicant may need to provide further details if anything is unclear on the application.

### Confirm Necessary Insurance is in place

Ensuring that your company holds appropriate levels of insurance coverage is a prerequisite for the Working Towards membership application.

**Employers’ Liability Insurance** is a legal requirement for most businesses in the UK. An adequate level of insurance cover appropriate for the business activities that provides coverage for claims made by employees who suffer injury or illness due to their work.

**Public Liability Insurance** provides coverage for claims made by third parties, such as clients, customers, or members of the public, who suffer injury or property damage due to business activities. This insurance protects contractors against the financial consequences of liability claims and legal expenses arising from accidents or incidents involving third parties.

**Professional Indemnity Insurance** covers claims against a business for professional negligence or errors in the services or advice provided. This insurance is essential for contractors in design, consultancy, or advisory roles, as it protects against claims arising from alleged mistakes or failures in performing professional duties.

### Business activity

- Registered, based and active in the UK, the Channel Islands and/or the Republic of Ireland (ROI)
- Confirmation of operating in the steeplejack or lightning protection sector

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## 2. Planning Meeting

Upon receipt of the application, an ATLAS representative will contact the applicant and arrange an online planning meeting. This meeting will review the current status and agree on key milestones using the development checklist. At these milestones, further meetings will be required, during which the contractor will need to provide objective evidence of the completed work to move to the next stage.

[link to table]

The Development Process depends on many factors. These include, but are not limited to, product knowledge, engineering experience, product range, and willingness to complete the process. This process should take no longer than 12 months, and a very rough guide of time scales is given below.

Application and acceptance as “Working Towards” member	- 1 month
Planning Meeting	- 2 weeks
Approval as “Working Towards” member	- 1 month
Life and Accident insurance policies	- 2 weeks
CITB Registration	- 1 month
SSIP Accreditation	- 1 month
Training and Certification	- 2 months
Compliance with Standards	- 1 month
Project Documentation	- 2 months
ATLAS Contractor Audit	- 2 months
Total estimate	= 12 months

In accordance with the “Working Towards” Procedure, the development process start date will be the date of Approval by the Council. This sets the 12-month period by which a “Working Towards” member must have achieved the requirements of the membership category they are joining.

The Working Towards centre representative may apply for an extension of 6 months to the end date of the development process on one occasion only. The application for extension, stating the grounds for the request, shall be submitted in writing to the appointed ATLAS representative at least one month prior to the end date. ATLAS, at its absolute discretion, may approve or reject this.

## 3. Approval as “Working Towards” Member

Once the development plan has been completed, the ATLAS representative will send it to Member Services for inclusion with the new member application. The plan will then be forwarded to the ATLAS Council for approval.

## 4. Obtain Necessary Insurances and Policies

Ensuring that your company holds appropriate levels of insurance coverage, including equivalent to B&CE Life and Accident Cover for all employees, is a critical step towards achieving ATLAS Contractor Membership.

**Life Cover:** An equivalent scheme would match the current B&CE minimum payment in the event of an accidental fatality occurring either at work or whilst travelling to or from work or the minimum B&CE payment in the event of a death at any other time due to any other circumstance.

**Accident Cover:** An equivalent scheme would provide payments for injuries comparable to current B&CE rates in the event of an accident at work or while travelling to or from work.

### How to Obtain B&CE Membership/confirm current cover requirements:

To obtain B&CE membership and access their Life and Accident Cover schemes, visit their [website](#).

## 5. CITB Registration

Becoming CITB registered demonstrates your company's commitment to training, development, and industry best practices, positioning you as a reputable and responsible contractor within the construction industry. Many contractors will already be CITB registered before applying for ATLAS Contractor membership.

Why CITB Registration is Required:

- **CITB Levy:** CITB is required to impose a levy on employers who are wholly or mainly engaged in construction industry activities. Businesses are legally obliged to complete Levy Returns based on the total wage bill. There are reductions and exemptions for small businesses. Further information can be found on the [CITB website](#).
- **Access to Training Grants:** CITB-registered companies may be eligible to access training grants and funding to support their workforce development. These grants can help offset the costs of training and upskilling employees, enhancing the skills and capabilities of your team.
- **Support for Apprenticeships:** CITB provides support for apprenticeship programs, including funding and guidance on apprenticeship schemes. Registering with CITB demonstrates your commitment to investing in the future of the construction industry by supporting apprenticeship opportunities.

Visit the CITB website and navigate to the [registration section](#). Follow the instructions to register your company online. You may need to provide information about your company's business activities, workforce size, and turnover. CITB registration is valid for one year and must be renewed annually.

## 6. SSIP Accreditation

Compliance with relevant legislation and regulatory standards is essential to achieving ATLAS Contractor Membership. Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) accreditation is a recognised UK construction industry standard that confirms organisational capability and compliance with UK health and safety standards. SSIP accreditation streamlines prequalification for contractors by verifying health and safety standards and reducing duplicate assessments. It enhances your reputation, increases your credibility with clients and stakeholders, and may open new business opportunities within the construction industry.

There are several SSIP member schemes to choose from. Visit the [SSIP website](#) to select a suitable scheme for your business and access the guide to SSIP registration.

Conduct a gap analysis to identify and address any deficiencies in health and safety practices compared to the chosen scheme's requirements. Based on the analysis, implement necessary improvements, such as updating policies, providing additional training, or enhancing safety procedures.

Once you believe your company meets the requirements of the SSIP scheme, submit the required documentation and evidence to the scheme's assessment body for review. This documentation may include your health and safety policy, risk assessments, method statements, training records, and evidence of compliance with relevant legislation. The assessment body will review and evaluate your submission to verify compliance with the SSIP scheme's standards. If your company meets the requirements, you will be awarded SSIP accreditation.

An alternative route to compliance involves obtaining an ISO 45001 certificate.

SSIP accreditation is typically valid for a set period. Ensure that you continue to uphold high health and safety management standards to retain your accreditation at the time of renewal. ATLAS Contractor members must upload certification as part of the Contractor Audit.



## 7. Training and Certification

Ensuring directors and employees receive appropriate training and certification is fundamental to maintaining high safety standards, professionalism, and compliance within the lightning protection and steeplejack industries.

To comply with the ATLAS Contractor Membership Criteria, contractors must undertake the following training to fulfil the requirements of membership:

- **Directors Role for Health & Safety:** Directors play a crucial role in shaping their organisations' health and safety culture. By understanding their responsibilities and demonstrating leadership in health and safety matters, directors can foster a culture of safety consciousness and accountability throughout the company. To meet the ATLAS Contractor criteria, the requirement is for a director or senior partner to hold a certificate for one of the following approved health and safety courses:
  - IOSH – Leading Safety (including IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors)
  - NEBOSH – General Certificate or Construction Certificate
  - CITB – Directors Role for Health & Safety
  - Brit Safe – Health and Safety for Directors and Senior Managers
  - RoSPA – Directors Duties
- **BS EN 62305:** Training in BS EN 62305 is essential for individuals involved in the technical aspects of lightning protection, such as design, installation, and maintenance. This training provides participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and apply the standard's requirements in practice effectively. Details of the course can be found on our website. This qualification is not a requirement for Steeplejack Contractors.

To meet ATLAS membership criteria, contractors must ensure that **at least 75% of operational staff engaged in lightning protection and steeplejack work hold trade-specific qualifications and are registered with CSCS**, a CSCS-affiliated scheme. CSCS registration and trade-specific qualifications are essential for demonstrating the competence and skills of workers involved in these specialised trades.

CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) cards are widely recognised within the construction industry as proof of an individual's competence and qualifications to work safely on construction sites. Different CSCS cards are available to reflect the varying skill and experience levels within different trades and occupations.

Relevant construction-related qualifications may include:

- **NVQ/SVQ:** National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) or Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) in steeplejack or lightning protection-related disciplines. These qualifications assess an individual's competence in performing specific tasks and duties within their trade.
- **Apprenticeship Completion:** Completing a recognised apprenticeship program in steeplejack or lightning protection work, typically combining on-the-job training with classroom instruction and assessments.
- **Industry Training Courses:** Completion of industry-recognised training courses specific to steeplejack or lightning protection work, such as courses in working at height, scaffolding erection, lightning protection system installation, or steeplejack techniques.
- **Skills Certifications:** Certifications from relevant trade bodies or associations that demonstrate proficiency in specific aspects of steeplejack or lightning protection work, such as welding certifications, rope access certifications, or lightning protection system design certifications.

Visit the [CSCS website](#) to apply for CSCS cards online.

CSCS cards typically have an expiry date, after which they must be renewed to remain valid. To renew their CSCS card, individuals must demonstrate that they have maintained their qualifications and continued to work safely in their trade. This involves completing refresher training courses, passing relevant assessments, or providing evidence of ongoing professional development.

- **Working at Height for Lightning Conductor Engineers:** It is a requirement for any operative renewing a Lightning Conductor Engineer card to complete this one-day training course successfully. Applicants must provide an ATLAS certificate of training when submitting a renewal application. This course can be booked via the [ATLAS website](#).
- **Anchors for Steeplejacks:** Any operative renewing a Steeplejack card must successfully complete this one-day training course. Applicants must provide an ATLAS certificate of training when submitting a renewal application. This course can be booked via the [ATLAS website](#).

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ATLAS requires contractors to provide **training equivalent to a minimum of 1% of the total basic hours worked by all employees**. This requirement reflects the importance of investing in employee development and maintaining a skilled workforce. Contractors must submit a training plan to support their application for ATLAS Membership. This plan must include the following information:

- Names of all current employees
- Estimated total number of hours worked for the current calendar year (January to December)
- A list of all completed/planned training for the current calendar year (January to December)
- Estimated total number of training hours for the current calendar year (January to December)

## Compliance with the ATLAS Working Agreement

Compliance with the ATLAS Working Agreement.

## 8. Compliance with Standards

To qualify for ATLAS Contractor Membership, contractors must operate in accordance with relevant British, European, and International Standards, particularly those specific to the lightning protection and steeplejack industries. Compliance with these standards ensures that contractors deliver high-quality workmanship, adhere to industry best practices, and prioritise safety and reliability in their projects.

ATLAS Contractor members receive access to British Standards online, which includes the standards required for membership. The current [standards list is available here](#).

## 9. Project Documentation

To prepare for the Contractor Audit, contractors must compile a file with technical documents for review.

Lightning Protection Contractors must have the following documentation:

- **Lightning Protection Risk Assessment** - an evaluation of a structure or facility to determine the level of risk it faces from lightning strikes and to identify measures to mitigate those risks. The assessment involves analysing factors such as the structure's location, susceptibility to lightning strikes, potential consequences of lightning damage, and the effectiveness of existing lightning protection systems, if any.
- **Lightning Protection Design and Calculations** – a detailed plan that specifies the layout and components of a lightning protection system (LPS) for a structure or facility. These drawings are essential for ensuring the effective implementation of lightning protection measures and are typically created by qualified engineers or designers specialising in lightning protection.
- **Lightning Protection Operation and Maintenance Manual**—This manual provides essential guidance for the ongoing management, inspection, and upkeep of a lightning protection system (LPS) installed on a structure or facility. It ensures that the LPS remains effective and operational throughout its lifespan.

Steeplejack Contractors must have the following documentation:

**Specification for a steeplejack job** - a detailed description of the planned works, access method, materials, techniques, and desired outcome. Detailed instructions and requirements are necessary for safe, effective, and compliant completion of the work.

## 10. Contractors Audit & Contractor Membership

When the contractor has complied with the project documentation, ATLAS will conduct a Contractor audit based on the category requirements.

When the audit is completed, the contractor will be re-categorised from the “Working Towards” category into the “Contractor” category. This will entitle the contractor to the benefits of Contractor membership. To maintain membership, ATLAS will conduct audits at appropriate intervals against the membership requirements, dependent on assessed risk, but not exceeding 18 months.