

Certification mark guide



CE marking (Europe)

This relates to a declaration that the products conforms to all relevant European safety legislation.

Not all products require a CE mark – only if there is a relevant European Directive e.g. Fire Blankets are not covered by an applicable directive and therefore should not display CE marking.

Fire extinguisher come under the Pressure Equipment Directive (PED) 2014/68/EU as they are ‘pressure vessels’

To demonstrate compliance to the requirements of some relevant directives (dependant on product type) third party assessment and certified is required by an appropriate European ‘notified body’ – this is the case for PED (extinguishers). They will assess a number of factors of the product including design and perform safety tests. Products that pass must display the CE mark and a 4 digit number underneath which is the unique number of the certifying body followed by the year of manufacture of the goods (in 2 or 4 digit format).

Certain product types do not require third party certification and the manufacturer can make their own declaration that the product is compliant with the applicable EU directive e.g. for certain types of electronics.

It is a legal requirement to ensure all relevant testing / certification is obtained (where required) and the CE mark is displayed on applicable products before putting them on the market for sale in Europe. It is also an offense to display a CE mark when relevant certification has not been obtained or where it is not applicable.

Note this marking only relates to compliance to applicable safety rules, it is unrelated to intended performance.



UKCA marking (United Kingdom)

Following Brexit and the UK leaving Europa, all applicable European law was transferred into UK statute, instead of Directives these are referred to as UK Regulations. For extinguishers this is the Pressure Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016.

Therefore, initially under law the testing and certification requirements for UKCA marking are in generally identical to those of CE marking although this may vary by product type and these legal requirements may diverge with time.

The key difference is that where third party assessment and certification is required this should be done by a UK based ‘approved body’. This can be in effect the same organisation that supplies CE certification but would need to be their UK organisation and be approved to test and award certification to a given standard by UKAS, the UK regulatory body.

As with CE marking where third part certification is required the UKCA logo must be accompanied by the awarding ‘approved body’ registration number.

It will become law that all products put onto the UK market after 31 December 2024 will be required to have UKCA marking (and appropriate certification where applicable).



UKCA marked using CE certification

For products that require third party assessment and certification it is currently possible to UKCA mark on the basis of a comparative CE mark (certificate) has been awarded. This is for certain product types only but is possible as both the EU Directive and UK Regulation are comparable and CE marking remains recognised in the UK. This is only possible where the EU 'notified body' has given permission. This is done mainly as an interim measure to allow UKCA marking to be introduced, whilst the full, independent process of UKCA certification takes place.

To indicate this UKCA marking based on CE certification the UKCA logo will be close to the CE mark and there will be one body number below them both (that of the CE awarding body).



The Ships Wheel Mark / MED (Europe)

This mark shows the product has been assessed and conforms to the Marine Equipment Directive (MED) 2014/90/EU – this would be assessed by a 'notified body', the reference number of which should be under the logo – followed by year of product manufacture.

Products are required to be compliant to this Directive for use in the Marine industry within Europe (Ships, ports, off-shore installations). For extinguishers main requirements might include thicker walls and paint.



The Ensign or Flag Mark / MER (UK)

This mark shows the product has been assessed and conforms to the Merchant Shipping (Marine Equipment) Regulations 2016 (MER) 2014/90/EU – this would be assessed by a 'approved body', the reference number of which should be under the logo – followed by year of product manufacture.

Products are required to be compliant to this Regulation for use in the Marine industry within the UK (Ships, ports, off-shore installations). For extinguishers main requirements might include thicker wall and paint.

It is not possible to infer MER compliance from MED certification (as with UKCA and CE), after 1st Jan 2023 for all new products produced and put on the market the Ships Wheel is no longer recognised in the UK.



Kitemark – ‘mark of trust’ on product

The BSI kitemark is certification mark issued by British Standards Institution to show that a business has been certified by them to a given standard – the circle mark that is used directly on the product is referred to as the ‘mark of trust’. It should always be accompanied by the certificate (KM) number (individual to the manufacturer and this application), the standard to which it is compliant and the associated scheme name. For example, for Fire extinguishers the applicable standard is BS EN3, which applies to ‘Portable Fire Extinguishers’, BS EN 1866 ‘Wheeled units’, BS EN 1869 ‘Fire Blankets’.

This relates to the product being tested against and meeting the requirements of an established European Standard for product performance. For example with Extinguishers to provides a fire rating for fire type and largest size extinguishable under test conditions (e.g. 13A)

BSI are a European ‘notified body’ ref no: 2797 and UK ‘approved body’ ref no 0086.



LPDB mark

The Loss Prevention Certification Board is another globally recognised third-party certification body, who can also certify products to specific standards e.g. a product can be certified to EN3 by both BSI and LPCB, as certain markets / users may recognise / prefer different bodies.

Certification marks on product will also be accompanied by details of the applicable standard and an LPCB Ref: which will relate to a certificate and specific SKU.



BSI kitemark – ISO9001

ISO9001 is an international Quality Management Standard – it relates to a business (not product) – organisation that have been certified to this meet all the requirements with their quality management systems (internal processes etc.). For many larger organisations this is a requirement for all suppliers. A business must also have this in place before it can apply for certification of many of the product specific standards. It indicates that a business has a structured management system and is often request in supplier assessment questionnaires, achieving certification can negate the need to provide further explanation and evidence of business process maturity.