
The Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) sets industry standards for microgeneration products used to produce electricity and heat from renewable sources. MCS certification is a requirement for accreditation to the Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) scheme. It is also required for accreditation to the NonDomestic RHI for installations of MCS certified technologies that have a capacity of 45kWth or less.

It is an established process that MCS will continuously review and update their Standards. MCS also need to review their standards when there are changes to relevant legislation.

Ecodesign of Energy-related Products Directive


ErP aims to reduce adverse environmental impacts throughout the life-cycle of a product and drive improvements to efficiency, while establishing a level playing field for businesses across Europe.


The product label will be produced by the heat pump manufacturer, and based upon test data produced using standard methodology established by ErP. This label will show the efficiency of the heat pump at either 35 or 55 degrees (see figure 1). The package label will be produced by the dealer selling the package or the heat pump installer. This will take into consideration all the elements of the heating system to display the efficiency of the whole system (see figure 2).

Figure 1: An example of a product label.
Changes to MCS Standards

In May 2015 MCS published updated Installation Standards for solar thermal (MIS 3001 V4.2), solid biomass (MIS 3004 V4.2) and heat pumps (MIS 3005 V4.3). MCS also published a new Seasonal Co-efficient of Performance (SCOP) calculator (MCS 026).

The updates to MCS Installation Standards for solar thermal and solid biomass are the result of a regular MCS review of Standards. Minor amendments have been made to these standards to provide consistency of language.

The changes to the Installation Standard for heat pumps and the introduction of the SCOP calculator are as a result of the introduction of ErP.

The Installation Standard for heat pumps has been updated to align with the changes that have been made to the Product Standard for heat pumps (MCS 007 V4.1) to reflect the introduction of ErP. This includes additional testing of heat pumps to establish a more accurate efficiency level.

The introduction of the SCOP calculator will enable Certification Bodies to use a standard methodology based on the requirements of the ErP to establish whether a heat pump is ErP compliant, and to determine the Seasonal Performance Factor (SPF) that will be used for the purposes of RHI.

The SCOP calculator will replace the Heat Emitter Guide (HEG) for the purposes of calculating heat pump efficiency. Unlike the HEG, the SCOP calculator will provide product specific SCOPs that take into account differences in performance between heat pumps. SCOP data will be published on the MCS website, and will be used by installers to calculate the SPF of the complete installed system. SCOP data will also enable consumers to compare the efficiency of heat pumps.

Impact on the RHI

These changes will come into force for the Domestic and Non-Domestic RHI on 26 September 2015.

The new MCS Installation Standard for heat pumps (MIS 3005 V4.3) was published on 6 May 2015, but until 25 March 2016 the older version (MIS 3005 V4.1) will also remain in force. For the purposes of the RHI, before 26 September 2015 the older MCS Installation Standard for heat pumps should be used. Applicants will continue to have one year from the date that their system was commissioned to apply for the Domestic RHI, e.g. up until 25 September 2016.

The updates to RHI Regulations come into force on 26 September 2015. For the following six months installers will be able to install heat pumps that entered the market prior to 26 September 2015 using either the new or old MCS Installation Standard for the purposes of the RHI. To calculate the heat pump SPF installers should use either the HEG or the SCOP. This period ends on 25 March 2016. After this date all MCS certified
heat pumps must be installed using the latest Installation Standard for heat pumps (MIS 3005 V4.3) and the SCOP calculator (MCS 026).

All heat pumps placed on the market on or after 26 September 2015 must be sold with a product label, and the installer should produce a package label once the product is installed.

From 26 March 2016 all MCS certified heat pumps, regardless of the date that they entered the market, must be sold with a product label, and the installer must produce a package label once the product is installed.

Heat pumps that entered the market before 26 September 2015 have until 25 March 2016 to provide additional test data that demonstrates ErP compliance in order to maintain MCS certification. These heat pumps will still be eligible for the RHI during this period, but consumers should be aware that a heat pump that has not demonstrated ErP compliance by 25 March will not be eligible for the RHI if it is commissioned after this date. Domestic consumers should check the Ofgem Product Eligibility List for more details on heat pump eligibility.

From 26 March 2016 consumers installing a heat pump who wish to claim RHI should ensure their chosen heat pump is ErP compliant. This will be demonstrated by the provision of a valid product label. Domestic consumers will continue to have twelve months from the commissioning date of a heating system to apply for the RHI.