



NI Trades

FREE HOMEOWNER GUIDE · 2026

Verifying tradesperson credentials in NI

The practical checklist for verifying Gas Safe, NICEIC, NAPIT, OFTEC, FENSA, HETAS and public liability insurance directly on the public registers, on the day of hire.

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Why the day of hire matters

A Verified badge on a profile or directory tells you a check happened on a specific date. It does not tell you the credential is still valid today. Insurance can lapse or be cancelled at any time, and trade registrations can be revoked for failure to renew, an upheld complaint or a failed annual assessment. Five minutes re-checking on the day of hire, directly on the free public registers, is the cheapest insurance you will buy on the project.

The six NI registers: who needs them and where to check

Register	Required for	Verify at
Gas Safe Register	Any gas work in NI (legal requirement).	gassaferegister.co.uk
NICEIC	New circuits, consumer-unit changes, bathroom or kitchen electrical work (practical requirement; Part P does not apply in NI).	niceic.com / find-a-contractor
NAPIT	Alternative to NICEIC; NI Building Control accepts either equivalently.	napit.org.uk / find-an-installer
OFTEC	Oil-fired boilers, oil tanks, oil pipework, flues (practical requirement; CD/11 satisfies Building Control).	oftec.org / find-a-technician
FENSA / CERTASS	Replacement windows and external doors (practical requirement; self-certifies Building Regs).	fensa.org.uk or certass.co.uk
HETAS	Wood-burning stoves, biomass and solid-fuel installations (practical requirement; HETAS notification satisfies Building Regs).	hetas.co.uk / find-an-installer

Source: each scheme's own published 2026 register rules, NI Building Control enforcement guidance and the relevant statutory instruments (Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 for solid fuel, the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 for other notifiable work).

What certificate to expect, and how often registrations are re-checked

Register	Certificate issued on completion	Reassessment cycle
Gas Safe Register	CP12 / Landlord Gas Safety Record.	Engineer reassessed every 5 years; business reassessed annually.
NICEIC	EIC (Electrical Installation Certificate) or MEIWC (Minor Works).	On-site annual reassessment of installations.
NAPIT	EIC or MEIWC (identical format to NICEIC).	On-site annual reassessment of installations.
OFTEC	CD/11 commissioning certificate plus annual service report.	Technician reassessed every 5 years; business reassessed annually.
FENSA / CERTASS	FENSA / CERTASS installation certificate.	On-site annual assessment of installations.

Register	Certificate issued on completion	Reassessment cycle
HETAS	HETAS notification plus installation certificate.	Installer reassessed every 3 years; business reassessed annually.

Keep every certificate: your insurer and, when you sell, your buyer's conveyancing solicitor will ask for them. Ask for the certificate before the final balance is paid, not after.

The 60-second pre-hire check

Before any deposit changes hands, run this checklist. Good tradespeople will be glad you checked; they want their certifications seen.

Check	What to confirm
Insurance certificate	Read the dates and confirm at least £1m public liability cover. Ask for a current schedule, not last year's certificate, and check the policyholder name matches the trading name.
Statutory registration	Gas Safe / NICEIC / NAPIT / OFTEC / HETAS / FENSA / CERTASS: search the relevant register on your phone, in front of the tradesperson if possible, and match the categories or scopes to the actual job.
Companies House	Confirm the trading entity exists and is in good standing.
Two references	A quick phone call each: did the work match the quote, did the timescale slip, how did it end?
Written quote	Full scope, fixed price, payment schedule, start and finish dates.

For trades with no single national register (general builders, groundworkers, plasterers, joiners, tilers), verify competence instead: proof of NVQ, City and Guilds or BPEC qualifications, a CSCS card checked on [cscs.uk.com](https://www.cscs.uk.com) where site access applies, and a chartered structural engineer ([istructe.org](https://www.istructe.org)) signing off any structural design.

The questions everyone asks

Is the ID card or certificate enough on its own?

No. A Gas Safe ID card can be in date while the business's registration has been suspended in the weeks since it was printed, so the live online register is the source of truth, not the card. Cross-check the licence number on the card against [gassaferegister.co.uk](https://www.gassaferegister.co.uk) on the day.

Does the category or scope on the register matter?

Yes, and it is the most common gotcha. Each Gas Safe appliance type is a separate qualification, OFTEC splits servicing, installation and tank work into separate categories, and NAPIT covers several trades with separate scopes. Match the register entry's categories to the actual job, not just the name.

Which register matters most for an NI home?

OFTEC, by some distance. Around 68% of NI homes rely on heating oil as their primary fuel (NI Housing Executive House Condition Survey 2016), the highest oil-heating share in the UK. For any new oil install ask for the OFTEC CD/10 (appliance) or CD/11 (tank) commissioning certificate.

Is NAPIT as good as NICEIC?

Yes. NAPIT registration carries the same regulatory weight: a NAPIT-registered electrician can self-certify work, issue EICs and MEIWCs and notify Building Control. What matters is that the electrician is in one of the schemes and the registration is current on the day.

Do replacement windows really need a certificate in NI?

Yes. Replacement windows and external doors are notifiable work in NI. A FENSA or CERTASS installer self-certifies Building Regs compliance and the certificate arrives roughly 30 days after completion; if it does not, chase the installer and the scheme directly, because the work is not properly notified until the certificate exists.

What insurance should every tradesperson have?

Current public liability insurance of at least £1,000,000. Ask for the current schedule, check the policy is in force on today's date and on the start date, and check the policyholder name matches the trading name. For larger jobs, verify directly with the named insurer that the policy is in force.

Ready to get quotes?

Post your job free on NI Trades and up to three vetted local tradespeople respond direct. No card, no bidding wars, no per-lead games. Your details stay private until you choose who to talk to.

nitrades.co.uk/post-job

This guide is general information, not legal advice. The public registers are the source of truth and update faster than any private platform. NI Trades verifies at application stage, on a dated check; always re-verify insurance and credentials directly on the registers on the day of hire, before work or payment.