



# Small electrical accessories

## Services for manufacturers

From compulsory third-party certification to the voluntary 'gold-standard' BSI Kitemark™ scheme, we provide services tailored to the needs of your business

If you're a manufacturer of small electrical accessories with customers in Britain and mainland Europe, you'll be bound by both the EU's Low Voltage Directive (LVD) and the UK's Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994.

This can mean different things for different products.

If you make domestic sockets, FCUs and adaptors, for example, you must have an accredited third party confirmation that they meet the relevant quality and safety standards before selling them in the UK. Self-certification is not permitted for these products under British law.

However cable reels (which can include domestic sockets) are subject to CE marking regulations.

UK BS 1363 plugs are outside the scope of the LVD and Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations as they are covered by the Plugs and Sockets (Safety) Regulations. This requires

ALL BS 1363 plugs sold within the UK to be Approved by a notified body (such as BSI via the Kitemark).

### **Whatever your legal obligations, though, we can help.**

Recognised by the Regulations, and the best-known standards organisation in Britain (BSI = British Standards Institute), we're the obvious certification partner for any maker of domestic plugs and sockets, etc, on the UK market.

The world's oldest standards body, we've been writing and developing British standards for electrical accessories since the 1940s, and we have detailed knowledge of European and international standards.

Working with us can help differentiate your products — something that's particularly important in a mature and competitive market.



...making excellence a habit.™

## How we help

### We provide:

- **Accredited product testing** through an international network of partner laboratories — third-party certification for products
- **Verification certification** — proof that your test procedures and technical data are robust when you self-certify
- **Kitemark certification** — licences to use our world-renowned quality mark on products and for promotional purposes.

The second and third of these need a bit more explanation. Although not statutory requirements, they're often stipulated by customers and specifiers. Even if they're not, they'll help to increase confidence in your products. This can be particularly true of the Kitemark, a voluntary standard that proves a company 'goes the extra mile'.

## About our BSI Kitemark schemes

Kitemarked products meet the relevant British standards — e.g. BS 1363, the standard for plugs — and conform to the specifications of the LVD and the Regulations. More than this, they're made by companies that have a strong and lasting commitment to quality control. Pre-certification to the international standard for quality management systems, ISO 9001 (by BSI or another reputable certification body), is often a requirement when you apply for Kitemark schemes.

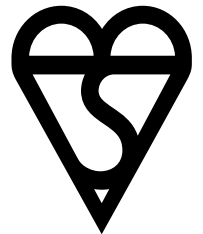
Continuous assessment is key to the Kitemark's credibility: we make return visits once we've issued the Kitemark certificate, and we reserve the right to withdraw the licence if standards haven't been maintained. This system has additional benefits: it means we really get to know and understand your business and that, if there are problems, we can find practical solutions that really work for you.

Our Kitemark clients think of us as an additional resource: a third-party specialist providing objective but informed support and advice.

So what kinds of products are eligible for the Kitemark? Over the years, we've developed Kitemark schemes for a wide range of electrical accessories, including:

- UK plugs
- UK socket-outlets
- UK socket-outlets with USB charging
- UK adaptors
- Fused Connection Units (FCUs)
- UK conversion plugs
- Cable reels
- Appliance couples
- Switches
- Other accessories (not covered by a published standard)
- Travel adaptors

**In all cases, the Kitemark symbolises the same thing: a good product and a good company. For your customers — and their customers — it means instant peace of mind.**



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **I already self-certify my products for CE Marking so they can be sold in the EU. Why do I need to bring in a third party?**

Strictly, you don't. However, as mentioned earlier, customers and potential customers will think better of you if you do.

Verification certification serves three main purposes. It:

- Provides peace of mind that all's as it should be
- Proves products are 'fit for purpose' when a standard has yet to be published
- Shows you're a responsible business with nothing to hide.

### **We're based in China. Can you still test and Kitemark our products?**

Yes. We have offices and partner laboratories all over the world and an established client base in Asia and the Far East.

Location isn't really an issue. We can approve your products wherever you are, and, as long as you can provide English versions of any existing test and assessments reports for our scheme managers, you're eligible for the Kitemark.

### **What do Kitemark schemes involve?**

This varies slightly by product. As indicated above, however, there are usually three stages:

- Quality systems assessment
- Product testing
- On-going assessment.

The complexity of the process depends on the complexity of the product(s) and the problems we encounter. However, it is rarely protracted: in some cases, we are able to issue certificates just a few weeks after an application has been made.

### **How frequent are the on-going assessments?**

This will depend on several factors — for example, number of personnel and previous test and assessment performance. Typically, we make between two and four return visits a year.

### **What about our suppliers, do Kitemark schemes cover them?**

Yes. In order to qualify for the Kitemark, you'll need a quality plan that covers the procedures and specifications to be followed by sub-contractors.

We reserve the right to assess a sub-contractor's quality system and might require access to their premises. This ensures the Kitemark scheme is as robust as possible.

### **We already have test reports for our products. Can these count towards the Kitemark scheme?**

In principle, yes. Much will depend on how old they are — and who wrote them. If they're recent and from an independent laboratory with UKAS accreditation (or equivalent) there won't be a problem.

### **What's the difference between CE Marking and the BSI Kitemark?**

CE Marking is a declaration from a manufacturer that a product meets the minimum legal requirements to be placed on the market in the EU. It relates to safety and reliability but not necessarily production methods and overall quality control. For this reason, many customers and specifiers want to see something more — an additional mark that reassures them they're buying the best.

Launched more than 100 years ago and an internationally recognised quality symbol exclusive to BSI, the Kitemark demonstrates that a product has been tested repeatedly over and above minimum legal requirements to make sure that standards do not slip.



## Do we have to Kitemark our whole product range, and what happens if we make modifications?

No. The schemes are product-specific. You can choose to Kitemark only those products where there's a demand to do so from customers and specifiers.

Modifications to your range or to individual products shouldn't be a problem. You'll be able to add new and/or different products to the licence – provided they meet the

required standards. Type testing (which typically will involve a sample of three) might have to be performed first – depending on the nature and extent of the modifications.

## Can I buy product testing from you as a standalone service?

Yes. We can help you whatever your budget and needs.

## What are the next steps?

Whether you're interested in the Kitemark, verification certification or simply want your products tested by a body customers and regulators trust, don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

**Our contact details are below. Talk to us to find out more about our services and/or get a quote.**

For more about BSI's services for small electrical accessories:  
Visit: [bsigroup.com/kitemark](https://bsigroup.com/kitemark)  
or call: **+44 (0)345 0765 606**

## More about BSI

**For more than a century BSI has been helping clients make excellence a habit.**

- Having worked with over 70,000 companies of all sizes globally, we have a proven track record.
- BSI works in partnership with industry experts, government bodies, trade associations and consumer groups to gain the widest possible market and industry view to shape our services for the challenges companies face today.
- Our clients reap the benefits of working with BSI teams with a wealth of experience in a wide range of industries. They help cultivate a better understanding of the challenges and share valuable insights.
- We provide end-to-end support, helping our clients monitor and maintain their excellence.
- We talk with and listen to clients every day, asking them what they want and how satisfied they are with our products and services. This way we ensure we respond to the needs of our clients as they arise.



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