

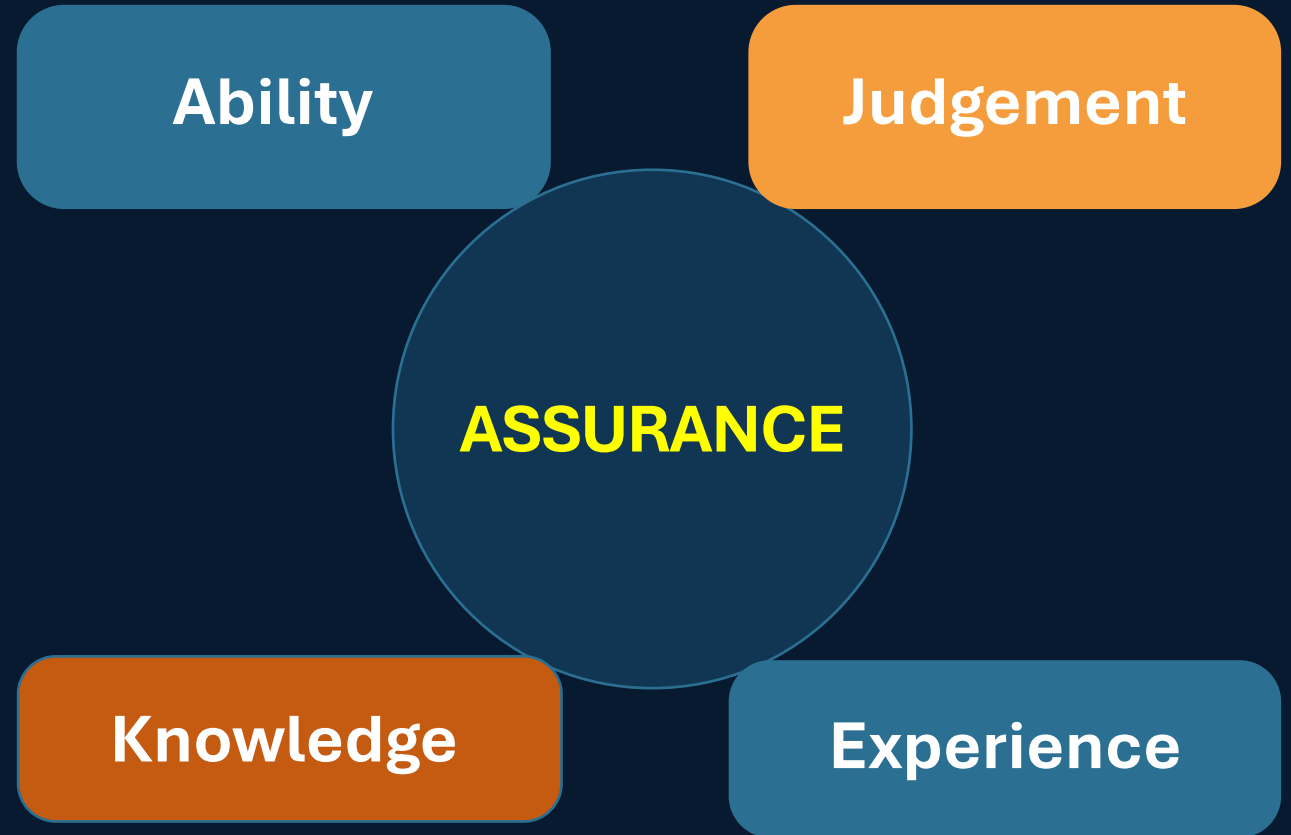
COMPETENCE

foundation of reliable
LEV assurance

LEV Commissioning - Getting It Right
25 minutes

OXYL8

Bill Cassells | OXYL8



Why this question matters

Not just because the 'Competency' appears throughout CoSHH — but assurance depends on it

If the contractor is not **competent**-

- **evidence** may look complete but
- **assurance** may be hollow

Legal risk

Failure to make
reasonable enquiry

Technical risk

A report may not
prove control

Governance risk

Boards need
defensible assurance

Duty Holder enquiry must be **active, not assumed**

Competence is more than a certificate

Training and qualifications are evidence — not the whole answer

Knowledge

what is known
and understood

Experience

relevant
practical
application

Ability

skill to do the task
to the required
standard

Competence = ability to apply **knowledge**, **experience** and **skill** in context

And 'context' changes with the task, the hazard and the consequence of failure

Test for 'Competence' is 'proportionality'

Competence requirements must fit the task and the risk

Low consequence
low complexity

- Simple checks
- Basic training
- Clear limits



Higher consequence
higher complexity

- Defined standard
- Specific qualification
- Relevant experience
- Independent evidence



If failure could
mean serious
exposure

'competence'
cannot be
informal.

“Reasonable enquiry”: what should Duty Holders ask?

Not every question is technical — but the answer should be evidenced

1 Who will actually do the work?

Do not assess on brochure/website only.

2 What qualifications are held?

P601, P602, P603, P604, M200, CoC(Control), LFOH(S) etc.

3 Is the scope within competence?

Testing is not Design; Design is not Commissioning.

4 Can show relevant experience?

Hazards, process, scale, complexity.

5 Listed on a recognised register?

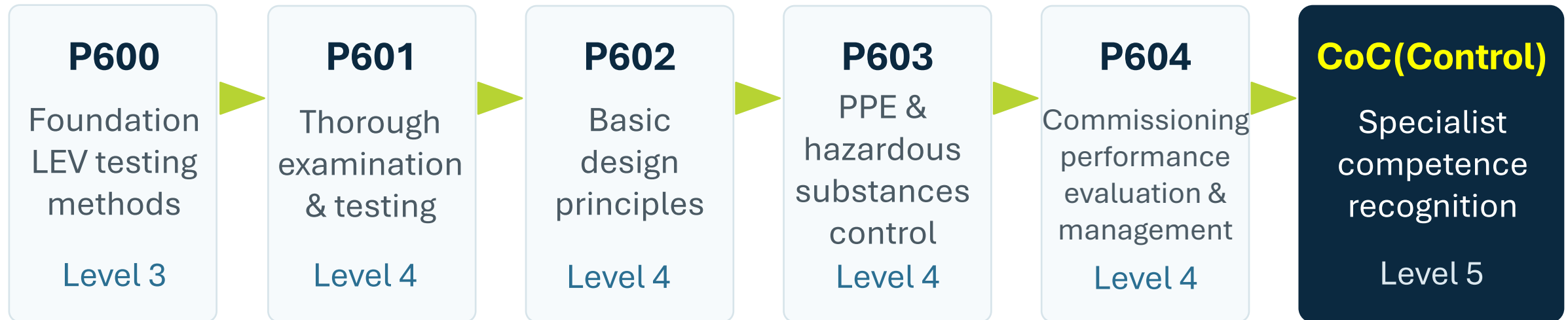
A useful independent checkpoint.

6 Who supervises work outside scope?

Document the enquiry — because undocumented diligence is hard to defend

BOHS LEV qualification pathway

Structured route from foundation knowledge to specialist professional recognition



Qualifications help Duty Holders **distinguish** trained, assessed and progressing individuals from **unsupported** claims of experience

What main modules indicate

A practical “what does this certificate show?”

Module	Indicative competence evidence	Duty Holder interpretation
P600	Knows testing methods & instruments	Foundation; not normally enough for independent TExT
P601	Can undertake TExT to recognised standard (Simple Systems)	Core minimum for LEV examiners/testers
P602	Understands basic design principles & performance evaluation (Complex LEV)	Relevant for design/specification review
P603	Understands PPE in hazardous-substance control	Needed where RPE/PPE forms part of control strategy
P604	Understands Commissioning & Management of LEV	Particularly relevant to today's conference theme
P304	COSHH Risk Assessment & Control Fundamentals	Helpful for Duty Holders and managers

CoC(Control): modules → professional standard

Point at which BOHS can recognise specialist control competence

CoC(Control)

Certificate of
Competence
in Control of the
Working
Environment

Level 5
professional recognition

Eligibility 3 years relevant professional experience, including management elements.

Pathway P601, P602, P603 and P604 route, with CV and professional discussion.

Outcome **CoC Control** post-nominal; route towards Specialist Licentiate status where appropriate [**LFOH(S)**].

Duty Holders: - much stronger indicator than
“I have been doing LEV for ‘X’ years”

Registers make competence checkable

Do not remove the Duty Holder's judgement — but support due diligence.

Register of Occupational Hygiene Professionals

- Publicly searchable route to check recognised expertise
- **PSA**-accredited register since April 2024

Relevance for Duty Holders?

- **Independent** confirmation is better than self-declared competence
- Helpful evidence that **reasonable enquiry** was made
- Useful for procurement, audits and HSE discussions

Verify the **person(s)** — not just the company

A simple competence assurance model

Four questions that turn initial enquiry into defensible reliance.

1

Task

What exactly
are we asking
them to do?

2

Standard

What level of
competence is
required?

3

Evidence

What proof
shows this
person meets
the standard?

4

Control

How will we
manage scope,
change and
supervision?

**Use this in: procurement, appointment, commissioning briefs, audit scopes
and report reviews**

Take-aways?

‘Competence’ - not an abstract legal word — it is part of assurance

- 1 Do not rely on company reputation alone** Check the individual and the task.
- 2 Qualifications matter — but are not magic** They are part of the evidence within a wider competence judgement.
- 3 CoC(Control) is the specialist benchmark** It **indicates** professional level of competence in control.
- 4 Registers help make competence visible** Use as part of “reasonable enquiry”.

Reliable LEV assurance starts **before the contractor arrives on site**

QUESTIONS

and discussion

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Competence is not simply a certificate.

It is **evidence** that the person **can** do this task, for the hazard and to required standard.

Reasonable enquiry

+

Proportionate evidence

=

Defensible assurance