



Expert commentary

BS 8000-3 — *Workmanship on construction sites — Part 3: Code of practice for masonry*

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1 Overview

The finished quality and performance of masonry is very much dependent on the workmanship of the construction. This standard is part of the BS 8000 suite of standards, which attempt to set down the 'best practice' requirements for the traditional site-based trades. It's important to note that this standard is geared towards new build construction and, although they will be relevant sections, it is not intended that this standard is comprehensive for maintenance and refurbishment work.

For residential development, the last few decades have seen a steady uplift in the design performance required from external walls, with regard to thermal insulation, acoustic insulation, fire performance and air tightness. Many of these performance improvements have followed similar trends in the commercial sector. In addition to the performance uplift, there have been a variety of different design trends and new construction products that have been introduced to the market.

As well as changes to the built project, there have been considerable changes to construction site management process compared to previous decades, primarily driven by improved standards and awareness of health and safety. The result of these regulatory and organizational changes is that the typical daily experience for a bricklayer can be quite different from previous decades.

The main change addressed in this revision is to rearrange the contents to fit with the new content structure from BS 8000-0. This revised structure is intended to better reflect the workflow of a project, from delivery of materials, through setting out, installation and handover.

The rearranged structure should make it easier for the suite of workmanship standards to be read together and for the user to locate the relevant piece of information. Rearranging the contents means that this revision appears to be significantly different from the previous 2001 version. However, generally the changes to recommendations given are relatively minor.

The exception to the generally minor content updates is the amalgamation of PAS 70, *Guide to appearance and site measured dimensions and tolerance*. PAS 70 was written by the clay brick industry to provide some practical guidance on how the visual aspects of fair faced masonry should be assessed and provide some initial site methods to indicate whether clay bricks specifically are within manufacturing tolerances. The industry feedback was that this guidance was useful to bricklayers and should be incorporated, so it was only necessary to refer to a single standard. PAS 70 has now been withdrawn.

2 Main commentary

2.1 Change to content structure

2.1.1 Detail of change

The BS 8000 suite of standards cover the 'best practice' requirements for the workmanship of traditional site trades. Although it was always intended that this was a suite of standards, historically there has not been a common structure for the standards across different trades. Whilst this has not necessarily been an issue for the individual trades who generally only review their own standard, it has made use of the standards more complex for individuals who are responsible for overseeing multiple site trades. To make the standards more accessible, a common structure has been created that will mirror the timeline of a typical construction project.

The general structure for the contents as given in BS 8000-0 is as follows:

1	General <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scope• References• Definitions• General statement on accuracy
2	Materials handling and preparation (subdivided by any different types of materials and/or assemblies as appropriate) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Receipt• Storage• Sorting• Preparation for work• Handling• Safety issues