



The Standard for Coated Architectural Aluminium

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Powder coating is the most popular finish for many architectural features found on today's modern architecture. It comes in a very wide range of colours and textures and on the surface can look excellent once installed. As a building is 'Only as good as its' foundations', what lurks in and under the powder coat finish matters a great deal. There are standards that specify the application of powder coating for architectural finishes and the majority of powder coaters in the UK and Ireland follow these closely and these are the minimum standards which should be achieved in all cases. QUALICOAT is a standard which encompasses all the current European standards, improves on them, insists that the output be checked by an independent body and you have the QUALICOAT standard. Specification to this standard would add cost to the finish making it prohibitive to specify surely? Specifying the QUALICOAT standard has 'no cost implication' as member companies realise the benefit of getting the product right first time and for a good life expectancy. This obviously reduces remedial costs which in turn pay for the slight increase in cost of the finish. They say "Beauty is only skin deep" (Sir Thomas Overbury - 1613) but, by specifying QUALICOAT you can be assured that the finish will be maintained for years to come.

Benefits of QUALICOAT

Member companies consist of not only the powder coating companies, but also include the powder manufacturers, equipment manufacturers, consultants and pre-treatment chemical suppliers, which make up the complete supply chain. Bringing these specialists together in one networking organisation allows all standards to be discussed and improved which will ultimately improve both the quality and durability of the QUALICOAT label. 'No cost implication' means just that. Members who have joined QUALICOAT in many cases have needed to add new machinery and systems in order to work to the higher standard, but the benefit to the members and the end users is an improvement in quality and durability; this in turn reduces the rejection rate during coating and also the chance of failure in the durability of the finish thereby offsetting the increased initial cost. In simple terms – QUALICOAT is a more controlled finish which is of a higher standard than normally supplied.

Independent Testing of QUALICOAT Standards

The high standards of powder coating achieved by members are regularly checked by Bodycote plc who are a well-recognised testing organisation with experience across many industries. Having a Global operation, they can be relied upon to offer a consistent and recognised service to member companies in the UK. Inspection consists a complete review of all the powder coat processes including pre-treatment of the profiles and final destructive testing of samples. Inspection is routinely carried out at member's premises without warning. Licences to carry the QUALICOAT label can be taken away if any part of the inspection does not meet the agreed standard. You may ask what the standards consist of and how these can be viewed, these are available complete with up to date appendices on the QUALICOAT website.



QUALICOAT Members

Members are spread across the UK and Ireland in order to offer a local supply of service and finishes to the construction industries – see the back page and the website for current membership. Each member company can offer advice direct to specifiers of powder coat finishes to ensure that the correct finish for the project is specified and coated correctly. Members hold regular regional meetings where the state of the industry is discussed, review the latest research on powder coating technology and listen to a guest speaker covering a topic concerning the industry. Members are very well informed about all the latest standards and changes that are occurring on the continent. Material being brought into the UK from the continent is often coated to the QUALICOAT standard as major European systems manufacturers recognise the high standards agreed by QUALICOAT. Many of the UK systems companies are also now supplying the finish as part of their standard package of services to the UK fabricators. Specifying QUALICOAT does not affect any additional warranties you may require on the final finish and these are available through member companies.

How to Specify QUALICOAT

There are more than 10 current members of QUALICOAT (UK & Ireland) who apply powder coating for architectural purposes. Whilst the specifier can select a single member to undertake all powder coating work, it is usually acceptable that some products are coated by other members, provided there is a clause within the finishes specification dealing with compatibility (e.g. colour) of the different coatings and mentioning the QUALICOAT standard.

There is now a clause in National Building Specification (NBS) section Z31 – Powder coating – that enables specification in accordance with the QUALICOAT standard. QUALICOAT (UK & Ireland) recommend the use of this NBS clause. QUALICOAT's own detailed specification can be found on their European website www.qualicoat.net and can be freely used to understand the high standard and how the licenced applicators are independently monitored.

Basic specification clauses:

- ▶ Polyester Powder Coating to aluminium surfaces to be applied by a 'Qualicoat Approved' applicator.
- ▶ Where possible to specify a 'Chrome Free' pre-treatment process.
- ▶ To supply the appropriate extended product performance guarantee.
 - ▶ All processes are in accordance with EN 12206

QUALICOAT Support

The website offers further information about the members of the association with their contact details and is regularly kept up to date with information on the standard. There are also links to other useful sites and services which ensure that ensure that the visitor can gain vital information about powder coating in one location. QUALICOAT also offer telephone assistance from their Birmingham office during office hours. Whether you have a general question or seek to find a powder coater for a specific task. The most important help is from the membership of QUALICOAT themselves. The businesses who have invested in more than just the basic equipment, staff and training, in order to offer the highest standards for the end user of their finishes. Ask any one of them and they will offer you straight and honest advice on any powder coat subject.

About QUALICOAT

QUALICOAT is a quality label organisation committed to maintaining and promoting the quality of lacquering, painting and coating on aluminium and its alloys, for architectural applications. In order to determine whether or not a coating meets a customer's requirements, the results need to be measured against technical specifications. On behalf of customers who have products coated, QUALICOAT defines comprehensive quality requirements and monitors their compliance by licenced plants worldwide. As a result, purchasers of coated aluminium receive a premium-grade product delivering long-term value with good quality. Since inception QUALICOAT has consequently made a great contribution to assuring the quality of aluminium parts used in architecture.

History of the Organisation

In 1986 several national associations encompassing coaters of architectural parts formed the QUALICOAT organisation. Their goal was to raise and standardise the quality level throughout Europe, laying down rules applying to their industry. Firms in many European countries have directly or indirectly become members of QUALICOAT. The aluminium industry was represented by delegates on the committees from the outset. This ensured information sharing among wrought aluminium producers and coaters. Today our membership extends beyond Europe with associations in Australia and South Africa and producers of coating materials in Asia, America and Europe. Membership is open to all national associations of coaters, EAA and producers of paints, powders, dyes and chemical products.

Member:

Members

Applicators in England:

ACP Coatings
Barley Chalu
Kaye Aluminium
Premier Extrusion Coatings
Superior Paint & Powder Coating
Vertik-Al

Applicators in Scotland:

MSP (Scotland)

Applicators in Ireland:

Advanced Industrial Coatings
APA Systems
Architectural & Metal Systems
Goodbody Colour Coating
NK Coatings

Pre-treatment Suppliers:

Almetron
Chemetall
H3P Technologies
Henkel Loctite Adhesives

Approved Systems Suppliers:

Akzo Nobel Powder Coatings
Becker Powder Coatings
DuPont Powder Coatings UK
HMG Systems
Jotun Powder Coatings Limited
Valspar Powder Coatings

Qualicoat (UK & Ireland)

National Metalforming Centre
47 Birmingham Road
West Bromwich
B70 6PY

t. +44 (0) 121 601 6746

f. +44 (0) 870 138 9714

e. info@alfed.org

w. www.qualicoatuki.org