

## Rope Access: Assessing Contractor Competency Transcript

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Hello, I am Michelle and I am Toby and we work in the City of London Corporation's Health and

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Safety Team.

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where it is our job to help keep people safe here in the global financial centre

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that is the Square Mile. Industrial rope access

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sometimes called abseiling is a growing industry and is commonly used for window

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cleaning and maintenance here in the city.

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The aim of this brief video is to assist building and facilities managers

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in asking some of the right kind of questions when selecting rope

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access contractors. This video focuses on competence

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there will be a second video focusing on reviewing risk assessment

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and method statements. Check our website for details. The consequences of any

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accidents or failures at height

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can be fatal. Rope access has its advantages

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but they may be safer alternatives you should consider. Are you choosing working

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from ropes because it seems

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easier or cheaper. Working from a rope looks straight forward

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but involves significant risks which the work at height regulations would

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generally require you to prevent in the first instance.

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So working from the ground or some kind of elevated platforms such as a cradle or

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cherry picker

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is often preferable.

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A flow pack remains the best option you will need to consider

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who undertakes the work and how you decide that they're competent.  
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Accreditation schemes such as IRATA provides assurance that companies  
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and  
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operatives are qualified but other experience and training  
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for example to recognise standards such as ISO 22 846  
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and British Standard 8454  
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may be relevant to. You need to ask the right questions if your rope access  
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provider  
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before they start working on site in order to check they are competent.  
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Let's look at what you need to know. The competency of your contractors  
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will depend on the nature and technicality of the work intended  
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unusual facades may require higher level up rigging  
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and emergency rescue expertise. Training is crucial to that competence  
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say you need to ask for evidence of qualifications. There should always be at  
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least two people in  
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any rope work team and at least one should be suitably qualified to act as a  
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supervisor.  
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This person needs a high level of competence training  
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because they were usually be involved in planning the specific detail of the work  
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such as deciding what anchor points will be used or how certain facades will be  
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descended.  
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This should also take a role in ensuring the rigging is done correctly and safely.  
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In the IRATA scheme you must be level 3 to  
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undertake this work. IRATA training is a minimum of a five-day assessed course  
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on the theory and practice of rope access for even the lowest level one training.

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Those at the high end levels 2&3

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will have logged thousands of hours on the ropes and attended many more courses.

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But some courses from other suppliers may only last two or three days.

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You will need to check if the syllabus is appropriate for the work required on

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your building

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and having a basic level of training certificate does not make someone an

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expert.

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It simply the minimum needed to be working safely on the ropes.

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Equally the highest level of training certificate does not make someone a

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structural engineer

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who can make judgments about structural loads of anchor points for the work

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they are planning.

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Questioning the level of training of those coming to your site

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and making sure the answers are appropriate before work commences

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is key and it is always wise to get copies of

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any training records your contractor mentions. You also need to check their

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risk assessment but

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we've covered that in detail in another video. So, in summary make sure that you ask your assailer's

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about the levels of training.

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And go further than that by checking that you are satisfied that they

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are competent to do the actual work that they are undertaking, such as

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planning a job or supervising the work of others. You might just be helping to

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prevent a serious accident.