BEST PRACTICE

LOCATION:	**Concrete products plant**	**ARTICLE YEAR**	**2026**
ACTIVITY:	**Hot working**	**COMPANY:**	**Marshalls PLC**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**No Sub Activity Available**	**COMPANY LOCATION:**	**Company-wide**
BEST PRACTICE No:	**BP2261**	**COMPANY TEL:**	**0000**
COUNTRY OF ORIGIN:			

TITLE

Topic 2 - Closing the welding and hot works competency gap through NOS-Based safety standards

ARTICLE

DESCRIPTION

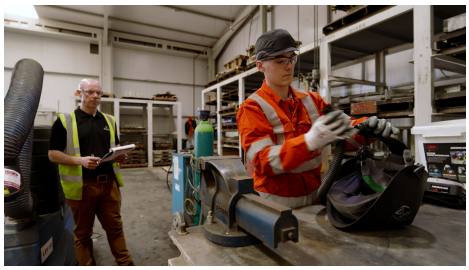
Marshalls' Reliability Excellence (REX) framework is the Group's audit system for standardising maintenance, compliance, and safety assurance across all manufacturing sites. It sets clear, evidence-based expectations across eleven pillars, ensuring every site is assessed against measurable standards and consistent practices.

Early REX audits revealed opportunities to improve safety adherence and confirm whether procedures were fully understood and followed by a changing workforce. Policies existed, but assurance of consistent application was limited, particularly for high-risk activities such as welding and hot works.

A working party reviewed accident data and identified that while statutory policies were in place, competence validation relied mainly on paperwork rather than practical assessment. Apprentices and new engineers, often exposed to higher-risk work, were a particular focus due to their limited experience.

To address this, the team developed a structured, auditable method to prove that every individual conducting welding or burning work could do so safely and correctly. The National Occupational Standards (NOS) were used as the benchmark for this system.

To find out more about the new system that was put in place by Marshalls view the 'Sharing good practice guide 2026' and watch the video.



BENEFITS

- The welding and hot-works competence framework closed a long-standing compliance gap.
- Maintenance-related accidents have reduced from 26 in 2024 to 15 in 2025 year-to-date (Jan-Sept), a 27% improvement on a pro-rata basis.
- Every site has a single auditable standard
- Only trained and authorised personnel complete welding or burning activities.
- Sites have evidence that individuals undertaking hot work have been directly observed and signed off.
- Assessments are carried out internally by experienced engineers during normal operations.
- Removed the need for costly external providers and enabled faster assurance.
- New recruits can be quickly assessed in-house.
- Provides a repeatable, evidence-based process demonstrable during audits or external inspection.
- Embeds apprentices with company's safe working expectations before exposure to high-risk practical tasks.
- The framework directly supports 'the Fatal 6' – by strengthening isolation discipline, pre-use safety checks, and dynamic risk assessments.
- Engineers display greater ownership of safety and a stronger willingness to challenge unsafe acts.
- Improved collaboration between engineering, operational excellence, and H & S departments.

ARTICLE IMAGES