

Acceptable water leakage

In the CWCT Standard for curtain walling, 1996, there was a guidance note stating 'A view may be taken by the Testing Authority that if one or two small droplets of water start to form during the test, but that these droplets do not start to run or flow, then such leakage may not constitute failure. In which case, the Testing Authority may decide to continue with that test and reserve judgement as to whether the specimen has passed or failed'.

The Testing Authority is defined as the body witnessing and certifying the test. The Testing Authority shall be either:

- a) An independent testing laboratory undertaking the tests and accredited for the required tests to an appropriate national body (UKAS in the UK), where applicable, or
- b) An appropriately qualified independent consultant or the specifier who witnesses and certifies the testing, when not undertaken by an accredited independent testing laboratory.

This clause is not present in the CWCT Standard for systemised building envelopes 2006 and this Technical Update has been prepared to give guidance on the interpretation of watertightness tests.

It is for the Testing Authority to exercise judgement when assessing the significance of any water leakage under test however all parties should be mindful that continuing the test beyond the serviceability condition may lead to damage which prejudices repeat tests in the event that the watertightness test is not deemed acceptable.

Any leakage should be investigated and the wall should only be considered to have passed the test if the leakage can be satisfactorily explained and means of preventing its occurrence identified. Situations in which the specimen might be considered to pass the test include where a detail causing a leak occurs several times in the test specimen and the leak only occurs at a single location where there is an identifiable fault in the assembly.