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# ASA Contractor Qualification – Pool: Why, Who, When, and How

*By Charles Hanskat*

So — you're a shotcrete contractor with a large majority of your projects shooting pools. The immense post-COVID surge in pool demand has kept you extremely busy, but it has also created an environment for less experienced shotcrete contractors to jump into the market. Is there some industry-vetted way to document your years of top-tier work and prove your ability to shoot a high quality, durable pool shell?

Or, maybe you're a pool builder subcontracting the shotcrete placement of the pool shell. How do you evaluate the qualifications of your shotcrete subcontractor? Do you dive into the details of each company's business when they give you a quote, including their organizational structure, equipment, training, and certification of their field and support staff, plus record of experience with other builders? Is there a service that can provide an industry-recognized qualification to help evaluate these potential subcontractors?

Now, yes there is!

At our ASA 2025 Annual Convention in Savannah, GA, we rolled out the newest ASA Contractor Shotcrete Qualification (QSC) category: Qualified Shotcrete Contractor – Pool (QSC – Pool). This broadens our established QSC program that addresses the more commercial, structural shotcrete market with Structural Level 1 and 2 qualifications. Though the structural qualification levels could certainly be applied to pool shotcrete placement, there was a clear need in the market for a qualification program specifically designed for pools. For more detailed information on the existing QSC Structural programs, refer to [shotcrete.org/certification-qualification](https://www.shotcrete.org/certification-qualification). This article focuses on the fundamental aspects to consider for whether the QSC – Pool program is appropriate for your company that focuses on the pool market.

## WHY?

Before engaging a pool shotcrete contractor, any pool designer, builder, or owner (let's call them the "clients") should thoroughly review the shotcrete company's qualifications. This is critical, as the shotcrete placement of the pool shell is the heart of the pool. A quality pool shell has great serviceability and durability that may last at least 50 to 100 years in normal service.

However, many clients don't have sufficient knowledge of shotcrete placement and thus are less prepared to fully to evaluate the shotcrete contractor's equipment, crews,

and resources. This may lead some clients to simply accept a contractor's shotcreting submittal based on years of experience without critical examination. But, though a shotcrete contractor may have been shotcreting for years, how does a client know whether it has been shotcreting right or wrong?

Unlike the infrastructure industry and commercial side of shotcrete construction, the swimming pool industry has very few existing programs for scrutiny. Only a few states have building codes regulating pool construction and, more specifically, the shotcrete process. Without a knowledgeable and experienced shotcrete contractor dedicated to quality shotcrete placement day in and day out, the entire success of the project and all components of the project, from the plumbing to tile and plaster, are in jeopardy.

Basically, this QSC – Pool program lets ASA do the work of vetting a pool shotcrete contractor's experience and capacity to do a quality job for the client. ASA has shotcrete experts (shotcrete contractors, engineers, researchers, suppliers, and educators) who closely review and verify a pool shotcrete contractor submittals. Members of the Contractor Qualification Committee (CQC) will also communicate with the applicant and key personnel to validate the application information, as well as verify the project references supplied.

## WHO?

ASA administers the QSC – Pool program as a review service for pool shotcrete contractors. ASA expects that those contractors who pursue the QSC – Pool qualification want to quantify and fully demonstrate their commitment and knowledge of the shotcrete business and the ability to routinely shotcrete quality concrete for pools. A successful application can provide clear documentation of their years of good work and the potential to build a quality pool shell. Thus, achieving the QSC – Pool qualification can be a great tool for a pool shotcrete contractor to differentiate themselves from other non-ASA qualified contractors to their clients.

## WHEN?

The QSC – Pool program allows for qualification in either wet-mix or dry-mix shotcrete, or both. The shotcrete contractor must specify which process they wish to pursue, supplying documentation to confirm their work over the last three (3)

years. The shotcrete contractor must submit at least 15 projects for review in each process for which they are pursuing qualification. Applicants must submit contact information for each project's references. Further documentation of the field and support staff is also required. This includes listing the ACI-certified shotcrete for each project.

So, before submitting an application, the pool shotcrete contractor must have:

1. Documentation, including references, on at least 15 projects over the last 3 years
2. Documentation on field and support staff on the submitted projects
3. A company representative attend the ASA Shotcrete Contractor seminar
4. That representative pass the QSC – Pool written exam

### HOW?

First, visit the ASA Contractor Qualification webpage at [shotcrete.org/certification-qualification](https://shotcrete.org/certification-qualification). Closely review the full policy that is linked on the “ASA Qualified Shotcrete Contractor – Pool (for self-performing)” tab. Once you decided to pursue completing the QSC – Pool qualification and have the required quantity of projects and the 3 years of experience, you should consider scheduling at least one company representative to attend

the ASA Shotcrete Contractor Qualification seminar (CQ seminar). The ASA typically holds these annually at its Annual Convention, but may offer them throughout the year if demand rises. You can check our ASA Calendar ([shotcrete.org/calendar](https://shotcrete.org/calendar)) to see when the CQ seminars are scheduled. One of the company representatives who attend the seminar and pass the exam will be assigned as the “Qualifying Individual” for your company.

Assuming the required time and project requirements are met, and you have an assigned qualifying individual, you are ready to complete the application. The application is available on our Contractor Qualification webpage.

Besides basic information on your company structure, equipment, and field and support staff, you will need to fully document your project list. When describing each project, it is important to include the following characteristics:

- New construction or renovation? If renovation, describe the scope of the renovation
- Residential or commercial?
- Thickness of wall sections
- Reinforcement: Size and spacing of reinforcing bars, level of congestion, or complexity of geometry
- Subgrade preparation, including difficulties with excavation, access, dewatering, or other environmental requirements
- Volume of shotcrete placed per day and overall project

- Additional details, or challenges faced and measures to overcome them

Reliable contact information for each project submitted must be available to the CQC Review Team for phone interviews. Applicants must request permission from their contacts to be used as references on their application and inform the contacts that they may expect to be contacted by ASA's Review Team. A single client reference may be used for multiple projects, however a minimum of three different references must be submitted.

Alternatively, project references can provide a detailed letter of reference. The details that should be addressed in the letter of reference is covered in the ASA QSC – Pool policy.

Once the application is submitted, ASA staff (or its consultants) will initially review an application for completeness. If any portions appear incomplete or inaccurate, the application will be returned with notation on areas needing correction/additional information. After the initial staff review, the CQC will assign a review group to process the application. If a review group member has a potential conflict of interest, they must notify the chair, and a substitute assigned. The review group will review the information, check references, and fully verify the supplied information. The assigned review group will make a final recommendation that is submitted to the main CQC for comment and final approval. Note that any members of the main CQC with a potential conflict of interest must abstain from commenting or disclose any conflicts with the applicant when commenting.

The ASA QSC program requires all qualified shotcrete contractors to adhere to the following code of conduct:

*As an ASA Qualified Shotcrete Contractor - Pool, we agree to ongoing compliance with the requirements and standards set forth in the ASA Pool Shotcrete Contractor Qualification Program Description. We will not knowingly or purposefully violate any project specifications or requirements. We agree to maintain the required insurance coverage, staff our projects with trained and certified personnel, and strive*

*to produce a high-quality product in a safe and professional manner.*

Failure to adhere to this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include being placed on probation or losing ASA Qualified Pool Shotcrete Contractor status.

Once approved, the ASA QSC – Pool qualification is valid for 5 years. The program policy describes the renewal process. ASA lists all the current ASA QSC on our website. Finally, the program provides a process for addressing public complaints about a QSC.

## SUMMARY

This article provides the highlights of the QSC – Pool program. You can find more comprehensive details in the policy and application, both publicly available on the webpage. Overall, we trust that the ASA QSC – Pool program provides a distinct and needed service to the pool industry. With a program that highlights the pool shotcrete contractors committed to quality shotcrete placement, we continue to set a higher standard for clients to recognize capable self-performing pool shotcrete contractors available for their projects.



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Hanskat has been involved in the design, construction, evaluation, and repair of environmental concrete, marine, building, and shotcrete structures throughout his career. He is active in developing codes and standards from many professional and technical engineering societies, including ACI, ASTM, AREMA, and ICRI.