

PUMA FAQs

Engage early. Save money. Save lives.



What is PAS128:2022?

PAS128:2022 is the specification for requirements for detection, verification and location of underground utilities. It provides guidelines for survey methodologies, data capture and accuracy and reporting standards.

What is PUMA?

PUMA is an independent accreditation scheme designed to assess the ability of utility surveying companies to deliver surveys that comply with the PAS128 specification.

Why is there a need for PUMA?

PAS128 is a complex specification with requirements around staff competency, risk management, survey methodologies, data management and reporting. Without independent arbitration, a company can claim to deliver surveys to the PAS128 specification with no proof of their compliance. PUMA ensures that accredited companies meet the same high standards, providing a benchmark for good practice.

What are the benefits of PUMA?

PUMA accreditation:

- Demonstrates compliance with PAS128 standards
- Provides clients with confidence in quality and accuracy of survey data
- Differentiates accredited companies from non-accredited ones
- Enhances professional reputation and commitment to continuous improvement.

How does PUMA improve safety and efficiency?

PUMA accredited survey companies adhere to rigorous standards for utility surveys. This increases the likelihood of finding buried utilities and reduces the risk of striking underground assets, which can cause injury or death, as well as costly project delays.

Can clients trust data provided by PUMA accredited survey companies?

Yes, these companies have been independently audited to ensure their competence and that their outputs and working practices comply with the PAS128 specification.

Who developed PUMA and who administers it?

PUMA was developed by The Survey Association (TSA) and LRQA Utilities Group, a global leader in assurance, certification and inspection services, following ten years of research and consultation.

What are the key stages of the PUMA accreditation process?

Accreditation lasts for three years and involves three stages:

- A. **Office Systems Assessment:** evaluation of the applicant's office systems to ensure compliance with PAS128 standards
- B. **Site Assessment:** on-site evaluation to verify the practical application of PAS128 specifications in real-world surveys
- C. **Annual Surveillance visits:** to ensure ongoing compliance with the standards, processes, and systems against which accreditation was granted.

Who can apply for PUMA accreditation?

PUMA is open to all eligible members of TSA who carry out utility surveys.

Does PUMA accreditation offer value for money?

The cost of the accreditation is roughly comparable with similar schemes auditing against ISO standards, such as ISO 9001, and the water, gas and electricity registration schemes for utility installers.

Do smaller utility survey companies get a discount on the cost of PUMA accreditation?

The cost of TSA membership is based on company size and turnover, so a smaller company generally pays a reduced TSA membership fee. The PUMA accreditation fees are independently set by LRQA and are based on the time the three stage assessment takes.

How can a company apply for PUMA?

TSA member companies should follow the application process on the [LRQA website](https://www.lrqagroup.co.uk/utility/puma/).

How can I find out more about PUMA?

Go to <https://www.tsa-uk.org.uk/puma/> for more information about PUMA.