

# Surface Preparation Guide

At Roadstone we pride ourselves on the quality and accuracy of information and advice we are able to offer to not only our direct customers but to associated trades and stakeholders. Unfortunately there is a considerable amount of misinformation or misunderstanding about the preparation of floor screeds to receive floor coverings. This is particularly true of calcium sulfate screeds.

It is true to say that some calcium sulfate screeds leave an obvious, friable and loose laitance on the surface which needs to be removed, usually by means of light sanding, using an STR floor sander with a medium or 60grit paper, prior to the application of floor covering. The amount of laitance will depend on the mix design at a local level (available sands etc) and it is generally accepted say that this laitance is only an issue from an aesthetic point of view.

To complicate matters, "Low Laitance" option calcium sulfate screeds are available from some screed producers. It is interesting that this is "Low Laitance" not "No Laitance". Additionally, some "Low Laitance" formulations result in a very tight closed screed surface which can make it more difficult for primers and adhesives to find a key. It is therefore just as important that these screeds are sanded. Even the manufacturers of such screeds

acknowledge the need for sanding prior to the application of floor coverings.

Good practice dictates that all flooring substrates should receive a light sanding, and vacuuming to remove dust and debris, as part of the floor preparation prior to the installation of floor covering. Therefore it is wrong to state that calcium sulfate screeds require sanding when other screeds do not. It is however correct to say that any laitance on the screed will be removed during the floor preparation process, and since the floor is to be sanded anyway, the laitance is not an issue.

The floor coverings contractor in general will have the necessary expertise to determine the level and nature of substrate preparation required for any given floor covering. Additionally, the suitability of the preparation is likely to affect the floor layers ability to offer a warranty. As sanding of the screed,

is considered by the relevant trade bodies, as being part of the general preparation requirements it is extremely important to consider carefully who takes contractual responsibility for the sanding operation.

For complete information this guide can be used in conjunction with Roadstone Data sheets regarding "Post Installation", "Ancillary Products" and our useful "Floor Coverings Flow Chart" found at <https://www.roadstone.ie/products/quick-floor-screed/>