

2 April 2020

# Training & Development Update

CECA Member Briefing:

## Training & Development - Coronavirus

This Update aims to provide all the latest information provided by CITB, Industry Stakeholders, Training Providers and Card Schemes in relation to the ongoing Coronavirus outbreak and the potential impact on Training and Development activity across the Construction Industry.

If you require any further information or have any queries, please contact Jemma Carmody ([jemma@ceca-yorks.co.uk](mailto:jemma@ceca-yorks.co.uk)) or Briony Wickenden ([brionywickenden@cecasouth.co.uk](mailto:brionywickenden@cecasouth.co.uk)).

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### CECA T&D Forum Virtual Meetings – every Friday 2.00pm

CECA is hosting Virtual Meetings of the Training and Development Forum every Friday at 2.00 pm. The aim is to keep members involved in Training informed in the rapidly changing world we find ourselves in at the moment but it is also an opportunity to raise any challenges members would like to discuss with peers or CECA to pursue with Government Departments, CITB and other industry stakeholders. If you would like to join these meetings, please contact [Brionywickenden@ceca.co.uk](mailto:Brionywickenden@ceca.co.uk).

### CECA Webinars

CECA are this week trialling a webinar system that will allow us to deliver free short seminars to members during this difficult time. These will initially be delivered on the areas we regularly provide seminars on, focussing on commercial and contractual issues and the NEC Contract, although we are looking at other ways we can help to support members.

If there are any particular areas that you think would be useful for members at the moment, or as particular CPD topics that we could provide while employees are working from home, then please get in touch with [jemma@ceca-yorks.co.uk](mailto:jemma@ceca-yorks.co.uk).

### CSCS Update

#### Important note: Telephone service temporarily suspended

Due to the growing concerns surrounding the Coronavirus we are experiencing reduced staffing levels at the CSCS contact centre.

We have taken the decision to temporarily suspend the telephone service until further notice. Until the service re-opens we are only able to accept applications via the online service. If you would like to get in touch with a member of the CSCS team then use the web chat service or visit the "contact us" web page and complete the online form.

#### Impact on CSCS applications

The growing concerns surrounding Coronavirus (COVID-19) is impacting CSCS's ability to issue cards to first-time applicants or those wishing to renew their card prior to expiry.

A key requirement for all applications (new or renewal) is proof that the applicant has passed the relevant CITB Health, safety and environment (HS&E) test within the last 2 years.

#### Current position

CITB have confirmed that Pearson Vue HS&E test centres and the network of Independent Test Centres (ITCs) across the UK are now temporarily closed until further notice. This situation will be monitored on a weekly basis.

CSCS and the wider industry should therefore consider the impact Coronavirus is having on the industry's ability to deliver the test and the subsequent impact this will have on CSCS card applications.

#### What does this mean for CSCS?

The full impact of COVID-19 on CSCS card applications is yet unknown. However, it is now clear that applicants will not be able to sit the test until the spread of the virus is under control.

Those new to the industry may be unable to apply for cards as they cannot sit the test or undertake training/qualifications relevant for the card they require. Also, the number of expired cards circulating in the industry will increase as existing card holders cannot renew their cards without resitting the test.

This could lead to genuine construction workers being turned away from site as they do not hold a CSCS card or their existing card has expired.

#### What steps are CSCS taking?

In recognition that COVID-19 will prevent some construction workers from meeting CSCS's card application requirements, we are asking the industry to support the following temporary measures:

Requesting employers and those responsible for site access and card checking procedures to use their discretion towards workers whose cards have expired since mid-March onward.

This is at the employer's discretion until the situation has stabilised.

CSCS has extended the grace period for card renewals from 6 months after the card expires to 12 months. This means that the card can be renewed, once the CITB HS&E test has been passed, up to one year from the card's expiry date.

This will assist those applicants struggling to find availability to sit the test and renew their card.

In response to Covid-19 CITB have developed some free of charge products to help employers determine if an employee is safe to work on their site.

CITB will soon be launching a temporary "LITE" version of the test. This will be available via an app that can be downloaded

on the Android and iOS platforms. A version for a windows PC/Laptop will also be made available. These are awaiting authorisation and should be available soon.

Please visit the CITB website for further details on the "LITE" test and to view CITB's recommended delivery guidelines.

We are in unprecedented times. Employers should expect their workers to hold a valid CSCS card as proof of their training and qualifications. However, until COVID-19 is brought under control we are asking the industry to support these temporary measures.

### Keep informed

CSCS will continue to monitor the situation and where necessary introduce further proactive measures to limit the impact on CSCS applicants and the wider industry.

We appreciate your support during this time and ask that you to continue to visit this webpage for the latest updates from CSCS.

Any enquiries related to this matter should be emailed to [communications@cscs.co.uk](mailto:communications@cscs.co.uk).

### CPCS / NOCN Update

*\* CECA NOTE: CECA is not supporting NOCN in issuing of Temporary CPCS cards (see below) and has written to NOCN expressing concern that this is being introduced. Please contact CECA if you have asked for the emergency card or are aware of any employers / clients that are refusing to be flexible during the current Covid-19 crisis.*

### CPCS Emergency Card\*

NOCN Statement: Difficulties in renewing may take the form of not being able to make HSE tests or CPCS renewal tests as Pearson VUE and many Internet Test Centers are closed. We also know it will be difficult to complete Vocational Qualifications in the next few months.

The industry has welcomed CPCS and NOCN Job Cards' advice on the relaxation by sites on cards that have expired. On March 16th CPCS recommend to employers that their sites could be more lenient on accepting cards that have expired from mid-March onwards until the Covid-19 situation has been brought more under control. This is, of course, the Employers' choice and decision. However, some employers require further controls and a longer-term solution to this issue.

Due to this and after strong industry direction CPCS is providing the ability to apply for an Emergency CPCS Card which would be valid for 12 months for those unable to renew cards or upgrade cards due to not being able to renew their HSE test or Renewal Test.

This card will also be available for individuals on a Red card which is expiring and they have been prevented from completing their Vocational Qualification due to the COVID-19 situation. Proof of Qualification Registration is necessary, however, if this is with Cskills Awards/NOCN then we can check this digitally without the applicant needing to provide anything.

This card is to support employers and individuals who do not wish to accept expired cards, giving our beneficiaries choice: [Apply Online](#) or [Download the Form](#).

The cost of this card will be £15.

*Who should use this card?*

*Can I renew my card without an in-date HS&E test?*

Yes, we will issue an emergency card – please use this form

*Can I renew my card without completing the Renewal Test(s)?*

Yes, we will issue an emergency card – please use this form

*Can I extend my Red card as I am registered for a Vocational Qualification, but my assessment cannot be completed so I can't finish the qualification?*

Yes, we will issue an emergency card – please use this form

*I have not recorded sufficient hours in my CPCS logbook but cannot do my On-Site-Assessments (OSA).*

CPCS will issue you with an emergency card – please use this form

*HS&E Test for tester Card Renewals (MAP Test), A61 Appointed Person (MAP Test) and A62 Crane Supervisor (Supervisors test)*

The same rules apply we will issue emergency cards for these occupations – please use this form

*I cannot complete my Vocational Qualification “VQ” to upgrade my card to blue.*

CPCS will issue you an emergency card to keep you working – please use this form

For any other applications please use the normal card application process - details of which are available [here](#).

### NPORS

#### Guidance for NPORS / CSCS Operator Card Holders – 25 March 2020

Further to guidance already issued regarding the NPORS / CSCS operator card we would like to update all card holders with the latest developments from NPORS. We are very aware that due to the closure of the HS&E test centres card holders will be unable to take these tests and therefore will not be able to extend their Red Trained Operator Cards or renew their Blue Competent Operator Cards.

NPORS has taken the decision to extend the registration period of those cards due to expire for 6 months at no cost to the card holder or employer. We feel that in these extraordinary times this is a reasonable course of action to take. We won't be issuing replacement cards in the first instance but if you require a card please let us know and one will be issued also free of charge. Though the registration date printed on your current card will show as expired, your registration information can be verified via our online card checker and QR code on the cards.

#### How to Apply

Please contact NPORS on 01606 351240 where you will be asked to verify your details. Once this is done the registration extension can be applied to your operator record.

If you have any concerns or would like to discuss the impact on your centre or learners please contact us on [info@npors.com](mailto:info@npors.com) or 01606 351240.

### CCNSG Update

Due to a number of CCNSG courses being cancelled at short notice the ECITB recognise that some delegates, when able to re-attend a course, will have a card that has exceeded the 3 month expiry grace period for renewal. In the majority of cases this will be at no fault of the delegate and as such the ECITB will be extending the grace period for renewal to 6 months from anyone attending a course after Monday 16 March 2020. This extension will be reviewed regularly over the coming months and updates communicated accordingly.

### EUSR Update

A valid EUSR National Water Hygiene registration is mandated by all water companies across Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and England in cooperation with the UK drinking water regulators, and is a core requirement of the Principles of Water Supply Hygiene and Water UK Technical Guidance in order to protect public health. It remains a mandatory requirement for all individuals working on the public water supply within Restricted Operations.

As part of their contingency planning for the COVID-19 event, water companies will be required to have a more flexible direct and indirectly employed workforce working across their water assets. It is therefore more important than ever that anyone working within Restricted Operations is properly trained and assessed in how to observe best practice on site and maintain the high standards expected by every company and the UK's drinking water quality regulators.

*“Hygiene at the moment is the highest priority for the health of individuals and the public and this does not reduce during this time but arguably becomes more important”* - Marcus Rink, Chief Inspector, Drinking Water Inspectorate.

Through discussion with the chairs of the Water UK Strategic Drinking Water Quality Network and National Water Hygiene Group we can confirm that throughout the COVID-19 event, the National Water Hygiene Scheme continues to apply as a mandated requirement and a valid registration must be maintained. It is vital that every person on site maintains the highest possible standards of hygiene, and no reduction in competence or compliance occurs.

Energy & Utility Skills are therefore working to help all organisations, where the current situation and restrictions could make it difficult for individuals to complete their renewal training and assessment before their expiry date or

gain access to an Approved Trainer. For a limited period, we are offering a Computer Based Learning (CBL) route for renewals of EUSR National Water Hygiene registrations. For further information click [here](#).

Should you have any questions, please contact the EUSR Support, Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 5.00pm, email [quality@euskills.co.uk](mailto:quality@euskills.co.uk) or call us on 0121 745 1310 (option 1)

### Sentinel / Track Safety Cards

We're working with the wider business to make sure we're doing the right thing for everybody's health and safety. Sentinel want to ensure all users are still able to access the infrastructure and are currently working on plans to ensure this continues over the coming months. If official advice changes, we will let you know. Click [here](#) for more information.

### First Aid – extension up to 3 months

*The First Aid Quality Partnership through consultation with the Health and Safety Executive and Department of Education have secured a very sensible extension arrangement for courses and certification in these difficult times.*

*The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is aware that people holding Offshore Medic (OM), Offshore First Aid (OFA), First Aid at Work (FAW) or Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW) certificates nearing expiry date, might experience disruption to access to requalification training as a result of events or circumstances generated by the coronavirus pandemic.*

*If requalification training is prevented for reasons associated directly with coronavirus or by complying with related government advice, it is reasonable and practical to extend the validity of current certificates by up to 3 months. Anyone taking advantage of this extension should be able to describe clearly their reasons for delaying requalification training, and demonstrate steps they have taken to undertake the training, if required.*

*This guidance comes into effect for certificates expiring on or after 16th March 2020. HSE will review this matter over the coming months and will issue further statements as necessary.*

*If your certificate expiry date is imminent it will be valid for a further 3 months. If you are midway through a modular 10 week or 6 week course there will be an acceptable 3 months extension. Requalification courses will be open to anyone who has been previously qualified, even if their certificate is beyond the 30 day after expiry. Candidates will be eligible to attend the two day programmes but they must demonstrate competence in all aspects to be certified. This modification to our standards and procedures will endure after special measures are rescinded.*

For more information click [here](#).

### CITB Update

#### Skills and Training Fund

CITB's new Skills and Training Fund has been refreshed and now encompasses two strands supporting; micro and small companies (up to 100 employees), medium sized businesses (up to 250 employees) to become a wider offer for employers. CITB has adapted to the COVID-19 situation by amending the scope of activity that will be supported offering more flexibility on what businesses can apply for.

The fund comprises of two streams:

- A Skills and Training Fund for Micro and Small Businesses where businesses can apply for a maximum of £10,000 (full details and how to apply [here](#)) depending on the size of the employer
- A Skills and Training fund for Medium sized businesses where employers with up to 250 employees are eligible to receive up to £25,000 (full details and how to apply [here](#)).

Based on employer need the fund will allow businesses to define then address their particular challenges. The focus has broadened from productivity and innovation, to helping employers with business sustainability and skill retention – key concerns for the construction industry in the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in at the moment.

Thanks to feedback from CITB'S customers the stream for medium sized businesses includes greater flexibility on funding rules to ensure it addresses employers' immediate needs. Employers should contact their local CITB Advisor to talk about how they can make this funding opportunity work for them.

### Leadership and Management Development Fund

Employers of all sizes need support which is why CITB'S fund for large companies will be launched on April 14. Its focus will be on retention of critical skills and investment in leadership and management development and training. More details will follow shortly.

### CITB LEVY: CITB to suspend industry levy collection

CITB's board met on March 25 and gave final approval to suspend the issue of its levy bills, due for payment in 2020, for an initial period of three months.

The bills will subsequently be issued for the full year. The delay will provide immediate financial relief to construction employers during the coronavirus crisis. In normal times CITB assesses and sends out levy bills each April in accordance with legal requirements. CITB levy bills are usually due for payment in May, but CITB will not seek collection on the suspended bills until August, or later if possible.

Sarah Beale, CITB chief executive, said, "Everyone in construction is facing extreme pressure at the moment and it's right that we provide the financial relief we can to protect employers and ensure that the industry is as prepared as possible for the economic recovery that will come when the crisis lifts.

"CITB is reviewing all of its work to respond to the rapidly changing skills needs of industry. We are continuing to re-evaluate our services, funding and grants to adapt them to meet industry's changing priority needs."

CITB will provide employers with further detail as soon as it can. We understood the need to provide early information, even before all details are available.

### Grants

We understand that cash flow is an immediate issue for employers, with this in mind, we have prioritised the processing of grant claims in order to pay grants as early as possible. In consideration of the current circumstances we are freezing the 20 week processing rule, this will allow employers to claim grants later as a result of the disruption caused by this pandemic.

We urge employers to check their Grant Online accounts for claims which need authorising, and to sign and return any paper Grant Claim forms we have issued as quickly as possible.

We will continue to monitor the situation carefully and update employers accordingly.

### Funding

The Skills and Training Funds for both Small and Micro and Medium-sized businesses will still be launched on 1st April and assessed at the end of April. Support to develop applications will be available from the CITB Partnerships Team over the phone or skype in addition to written guidance available on the web site.

We will offer increased flexibility to those businesses with current Skills and Training Fund Projects; recognising that changing business need will result in requests for different training, or a change to delivery time scales.

We are also reviewing how the funds can be used to help businesses retain essential skills and support managers to provide the right leadership through a challenging period.

### CITB Apprenticeships

In light of recent Government advice, CITB Apprenticeships has taken the decision to base all staff at home wherever possible. As a result of this decision, apprentice reviews and engagement with your apprentices and colleagues will be carried out via phone or Skype call and we would appreciate your support with this as we work to keep both our staff and yours safe.

Your Apprenticeship Officer will continue to be your point of contact and will provide ongoing support to you and your apprentices.

A letter is being issued to all apprentices, via email today (19 March), advising them that their Apprenticeship Officer will be in touch and in the meantime to follow the NHS and Government guidance. We will contact you with more information as the situation develops.

### [CITB Directory & Register](#)

We remain committed to supporting our Approved Training Organisations (ATOs), employers and delegates. We are encouraging ATOs to relax cancellation and refund policies, to assist candidates in rescheduling courses attendance free of charge, should they be unable to attend as a result of COVID-19.

In addition to the support offered we have advised all ATOs to take additional precautionary measures across their centres as we collectively work to combat the spread of COVID-19.

CITB is continually reviewing the situation and will provide further updates as and when we can.

### [Site Safety Plus](#)

We remain committed to supporting the construction industry with training, whilst putting the health and safety of our Site Safety Plus training providers and delegates first.

We are encouraging all Site Safety Plus centres to relax cancellation and refund policies, to assist candidates in rescheduling courses attendance free of charge, should they be unable to attend as a result of COVID-19.

Additionally, any delegate whose SMSTS/SSSTS achievement has expired since 15 March 2020 and who hasn't been able to renew in time due to COVID-19, will be allowed to take the refresher rather than the full course - this will remain in place whilst the current Coronavirus situation continues and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Centres have been asked to take additional precautionary measures across their centres as we collectively work to combat the spread of COVID-19.

We understand that difficulties accessing SSP courses will have an impact on card applications and renewals, and also on meeting many employers and federations standards for working on site. We have been liaising with card scheme providers to agree how to tackle this challenge and we are supportive of the calls for employers to provide flexibility on recently expired cards. We ask employers to show this same discretion for recently expired SSP courses such as SSSTS and SMSTS. You can find more on card schemes by following the links below

CITB is continually reviewing the situation and will provide further updates as and when we can. Please visit the [CSCS website](#) regarding the actions they are taking around COVID-19 and card applications.

### [Health & Safety Test: Temporary Pearson Vue test centres closure](#)

As a result of the evolving situation around COVID-19, CITB have announced the temporary closure of all Pearson Vue HS&E test centres from Friday 20 March until further notice.

From Tuesday 24 March we are also temporarily suspending testing throughout our Independent Test Centre (ITC) network.

### [New products available to help you](#)

In response we have developed some free of charge products that we hope will help employers run their own in-house interim testing to give a level of local assurance to help the employer to determine if an employee is safe to work on their site.

We have developed the following temporary LITE testing products

CITB: LITE Operatives and Specialist HS&E TEST ONLY

[Apple iOS version](#) (External link - Opens in a new tab or window)

Android version – Awaiting authorization. Available soon.

[PC download version](#) (External link - Opens in a new tab or window)

CITB: LITE Managers and Professionals HS&E TEST ONLY

[Apple iOS version](#) (External link - Opens in a new tab or window)

Android version – Awaiting authorization. Available soon.

### [Candidate support](#)

We are working closely with Pearson Vue to ensure support is in place to reschedule or refund a candidates test.

In addition, we continue to work alongside Pearson Vue to understand ways of maximising testing capacity for when the test centre network reopens.

We wish to take this opportunity to assure you we are doing everything we can to ensure employers and candidates are supported through this difficult time; the health and wellbeing of the British Construction Industry is of paramount importance.

If you have any concerns or queries, please email: [HSEtestdev@citb.co.uk](mailto:HSEtestdev@citb.co.uk)

### [Inspiring Change – Postponed until Thursday 10 December 2020](#)

The Awards ceremony and conference for Inspiring Change is postponed until Thursday 10 December. The deadline for award entries is extended to 23 October.

### [Linked in Learning on Remote Working](#)

Information on setting yourself and your teams up for successful remote working is available [here](#).