



AN **nocn** JOB CARD

# CPCS Competence Interview Candidate Guidance

Version 1.0 May 2021

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## 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In line with the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) requirements to phase out CPCS Competent Operator cards gained through Industry accreditation by the 31 December 2024. The Construction Plant Competent Scheme (CPCS) introduced the CPCS Competence Interview as an agreed alternative method for CPCS Competent Operator cardholders to renew their cards in the event that they do not hold a recognised VQ.

## 2. Scope of this guidance

- 2.1 This CPCS guide is intended for CPCS Competent Operator cardholders who's CPCS Competent Operator card was issued under Industry Accreditation (also referred to as Grandfather Rights), or transferred from other card schemes under the agreement at the time of issue and do not currently hold a VQ.
- 2.2 CPCS Competent Operator cardholders are required to follow this guidance in order to complete the CPCS Competence Interview, removing the requirement to hold a full VQ at the point of renewing your CPCS Competent Operator card.
- 2.3 This document underpins CPCS's commitment to ensuring the integrity of CPCS cards issued.
- 2.4 This guidance is only intended for holders of CPCS Competent Operator cards who are not holders of relevant VQ's aligned to the categories on their card.

## 3. Intended readership and layout of this guidance

- 3.1 The intended audience for this guidance is:
  - a. CPCS Competent Operator card holders (without the required VQ)
  - b. CPCS Test Centres
  - c. CPCS Testers
  - d. All individuals involved in the delivery, testing, administration and quality assurance of CPCS's products or services, including staff members and invigilators in CPCS Test Centres and associated sites.
- 3.2 This guidance covers the routes available to access, undertake and complete the CPCS Competence Interview including options available for the interview to be completed online. This does not include guidance for the CPCS Technical Test (Theory or Practical) or On-site Assessment.
- 3.3 Potential and existing cardholders should refer to the following documents for further information:
  - a. CPCS Scheme Booklets for Operators\*
  - b. CPCS Online Delivery Policy and Procedure\*

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\*These publications are available by visiting the CPCS Web Site [www.nocnjobcards.org](http://www.nocnjobcards.org)

## 4. Purpose

- 4.1 The purpose of this guidance is to:
- a. establish a clear route that allows a CPCS Competent Operator cardholder to access the CPCS Competence Interview
  - b. outline individual responsibilities in ensuring CPCS Competence Interviews are administered in a way which is compliant to this guidance
  - c. establish resource and space requirements regarding the conduct of CPCS Competence Interviews
  - d. establish quality and delivery arrangements of the CPCS Competence Interview to maintain confidentiality and integrity of CPCS Competence Interview materials
  - e. outline the requirements for the quality assurance of the CPCS Competence Interview
  - f. outline pricing structures regarding the delivery of the CPCS Competence Interview
  - g. confirm actions that will be taken against individuals, or centres who are found to be in breach of this guidance.

## 5. What are the requirement for the CPCS Competence Interview?

- 5.1 Hold a Competent Operator Card that requires renewal but no VQ previously held.
- 5.2 The requirement for this been set by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) who have stated that the minimum standard for skilled operators is a Level 2 Vocational Qualification (VQ) relevant to their occupation.
- 5.3 You can find the CLC requirements to industry online at: [www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk](http://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk) - [CLC decision on card schemes.](#)
- 5.4 CPCS is required to phase out Competent Operator cards gained via Industry Accreditation (sometimes also referred to as Grandfather Rights) from 1 January 2020, and any cards issued through this route will be completely removed from the Scheme by 31 December 2024.
- 5.5 Industry Accreditation previously allowed workers to obtain a CPCS Competent Operator Card based on knowledge and demonstration of practical ability rather than the achievement of a recognised qualification.
- 5.6 This route was closed to new card applicants in 2003 when a minimum of a Level 2 (VQ) relevant to the categories held was required, but those already holding a Competent Operator card were still able to renew under the old rules.
- 5.7 The CPCS Competence Interview is a new element introduced for CPCS Competent Operator cardholders who initially obtained their card via Industry accreditation to demonstrate their underpinning knowledge of activity undertaken in the workplace which would normally be captured during an VQ Assessors observation visit when an individual is working towards the achievement of a VQ.
- 5.8 A CPCS Competent Operator cardholder can still renew their CPCS Competent

Operator card obtained by Industry Accreditation by following the requirements as outlined in the CPCS Scheme Booklet for Operators, however without providing evidence that a VQ or CPCS Competence Interview has been achieved means that the renewed Competent Operator card will only show an expiry date of 31 December 2024, being the date that current route will be phased out for those that do not hold a relevant VQ. CPCS will stop issuing these cards from 30 June 2024.

**Note:** To renew a Competent Operator Card from the 01 July 2024 it will be a mandatory requirement to complete the CPCS Competence Interview if there is no evidence that a relevant VQ is already held.

## 6. When do I need to take the CPCS Competence Interview?

- 6.1 If you wish to receive a CPCS Competent Operator card that has a life span of 5-years (from last expiry date) you need to undertake the CPCS Competence Interview prior to you submitting an application to renew your card.
- 6.2 If you have already renewed your card and have received a card with a reduced expiry date i.e. less than 5-years (from last expiry date) and wish to 'top up' to the full 5-year life span, you can complete the CPCS Competent Interview at your earliest convenience as long as it is before the expiry date of 31 December 2024 as after this date you will be not able to renew the card without the CPCS Competence Interview.
- 6.3 Once complete you can apply to CPCS to 'top up' your CPCS card.

**Note:** If required to do so, a CPCS Competent Operator cardholder will only be required to undertake the CPCS Competence Interview once in their lifetime whilst in possession of a CPCS Competent Operator card.

## 7. What if I have a VQ in another occupation?

- 7.1 Should you have a VQ which has been achieved within another related occupation, if the VQ contains the following units this VQ can be used instead of completing the CPCS Competent Interview:
  - a. Conforming to General Health, Safety and Welfare in the Workplace\* &
  - b. Conforming to Productive Working Practices in the Workplace\*
- 7.2 Further advice can be sought regarding the content of your VQ and if it can be used instead of the CPCS Competence Interview by contacting CPCS.

## 8. How can I get it?

- 8.1 The CPCS Competence Interview is delivered through CPCS Test Centres, by CPCS Testers registered to the Test Centre.
- 8.2 You may contact a CPCS Test Centre using the list of CPCS Test Centres that is available

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\* Or the equivalent wording on your VQ cert relating to your Awarding Organisation

on the CPCS website (refer to Section 14: Further sources of information, for details on how to access this information).

- 8.3 There are two options for the delivery of the CPCS Competence Interview:
  - a. one to one session with a CPCS tester at a CPCS Test Centre or
  - b. one to one session with a CPCS tester via an electronic online meeting platform, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom etc.
- 8.4 Both options of delivery must be recorded audibly (visually & audibly if delivered via an online platform). Should you not wish for the interview to be recorded, the CPCS Competence Interview cannot be undertaken and you will be required to undertake a VQ in order to be able to renew your card for the full 5year life span.
- 8.5 For quality assurance purposes, CPCS External Quality Assurance (EQA) personnel may be in attendance during the interview.

## 9. How long is the CPCS Competent Interview?

The CPCS Competence Interview should not exceed 90minutes. This is considered an appropriate time for a candidate to respond to the questions and relay their experiences and understanding to the CPCS Tester.

## 10. How Much Does it cost?

There is a maximum charge of £160 that a CPCS Test Centre may charge, this cost also covers the cost of renewing the Competent Operator Card.

## 11. What do I need to do before I take the CPCS Competence Interview?

- 11.1 During the introduction to the CPCS Competence Interview, the CPCS Tester will be required to confirm your identity. You will be required to present forms of identification (containing both a photograph and signature) from the list below and must be legible to the tester:
  - a. a photograph card driving licence (no more than 6 months out of date);
  - b. a passport (no more than 6 months out of date);
  - c. a non-UK driving licence with a photograph and signature; or
  - d. an EU identity card with a photograph and signature.
- 11.2 Should you not have one of the forms of identification listed above, contact the CPCS Test Centre that are arranging your CPCS Competence Interview who may be able to suggest or use alternative methods to confirm your identity.
- 11.3 If you are planning to undertake the CPCS Competence Interview via an online meeting platform, please ensure that the following is in place:
  - a. The location selected allows you to undertake the test without being disturbed, as the interview will be recorded and must be completed in one continuous

session, if there is an interruption to the recording the tester may be required to restart the interview.

- b. Ensure that you undertake the interview on a one to one basis with the tester and that no one else is in the room.
  - c. Should you require assistance with using the IT equipment this should be discussed with the Test Centre / Tester prior to the start of the test.
  - d. You have IT equipment with a working camera, microphone and speakers.
  - e. Ensure any fees have been paid prior to the start of the interview as you should not be asked to make any payments during the meeting for security reasons.
- 11.4 During the CPCS Competence Interview (online) should the tester identify that you are being aided to provide a response to a discussion point by a third party, the tester will advise that the interview should be terminated and will have to be rescheduled to be delivered at the a CPCS Test Centre.

**Note:** This may incur additional charges.

## 12. What do I need to do after I achieve the CPCS Competence Interview?

- 12.1 If you are renewing your CPCS Competent Operator card for first time since 01 January 2020 you will also need to meet all the other requirements for renewing a Competent Operator Card published in the CPCS Scheme Booklet for Operators (Section D4).
- 12.2 If you are completing the Competence Interview following the renewal of your CPCS Competent Operator card in order to get a full 5-year lifespan, please contact CPCS following the achievement to order a replacement card. The cost of the replacement will need to be paid for before it can be sent out, currently £10.

## 13. How can I find out the answers to the questions?

- 13.1 There are no set responses to the scenarios / questions posed by the tester, the answer will be your experiences gained from undertaking and completing work activities from your work history.
- 13.2 To help you prepare for the interview, you can download or view the CPCS Competence Interview Template from the Revision Support Documents page of the CPCS Website. (refer to Section 14: Further sources of information, for details on how to access this information). The competence interview – Template will highlight the Subject areas, discussion criteria and a response guide which will be used by the CPCS Tester during the interview and by reading this document prior to the interview it will help you identify and prepare your response prior to undertaking the interview.

## 14. Further Sources of Information

CPCS Helpline	0300 999 1177 (Option 2)
CPCS Website	<a href="http://www.nocnjobcards.org">www.nocnjobcards.org</a>
CPCS Revision Support Documents	<a href="http://www.nocnjobcards.org/help-and-support-documents/revision-support-documents/">www.nocnjobcards.org/help-and-support-documents/revision-support-documents/</a>
CPCS Test Centre Search	<a href="http://www.nocnjobcards.org/help-and-support/test-centre-search/">www.nocnjobcards.org/help-and-support/test-centre-search/</a>
CPCS Scheme Booklet for Operators	<a href="http://www.nocnjobcards.org/help-and-support/cpcs-support-documents/operator/">www.nocnjobcards.org/help-and-support/cpcs-support-documents/operator/</a>