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Roofing Contractors Training Information Manual

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Onsite assessment and training OSAT

The construction industry is moving towards a fully trained, fully qualified workforce. Increasing numbers of roofing companies are realising that a workforce with the necessary skills and qualifications delivers higher quality, more cost-efficient work.

The improved teamwork and increased awareness of health and safety also mean earlier completion dates, less time wasted correcting mistakes and fewer accidents.

Roofing operatives benefit too. Being trained to nationally recognised qualifications such as an NVQ or SVQ shows employers they have the necessary skills to do the job. And, combined with an up-to-date health and safety test, they can obtain a CSCS card. This will enhance their reputation and be something they can be proud of.

These qualifications not only open up more possibilities, but are also becoming essential to get on in the industry. More and more roofing companies and their clients are demanding that roofing operatives on their sites (whether they are employed directly or through sub-contractors) prove their competence with cardscheme membership.

Bringing qualifications to work

You may already have a highly experienced workforce who you trust and rely on to get the job done. But often these workers don't have the qualifications to get the CSCS card they'll need to gain access to sites in the future.

And when the workforce is spending most of their time on site, ensuring employees are qualified can be difficult.

That's why OSAT (on-site assessment and training) has been created. It provides your workforce with a formal N/SVQ qualification, leading to vital CSCS card accreditation while they are working on site.

How on-site assessment and training works

OSAT is an alternative route to an N/SVQ for experienced operatives.

By visiting your site, OSAT support staff are able to find out what skills your staff already have. They'll then develop an action plan to fill any gaps. Your staff can then work to this plan at their own speed and our support staff will provide ongoing advice and assistance as required.

OSAT offers many benefits:

- It helps your workers achieve vital CSCS cards quickly and easily
- It takes account of existing skills so workers only train towards the things they don't know how to do
- It's carried out on site, so no downtime
- It's easier for employees for whom reading or writing is difficult
- It helps remove academic barriers.

The stages of OSAT

There are six key stages to the OSAT process:

Stage 1

Employer contacts ConstructionSkills or an OSAT centre to enquire about OSAT.

Stage 2

ConstructionSkills, or one of its partners, will discuss the OSAT process with you and help you pick the best 'option' for your needs. They will also talk you through the grants available and identify suitable OSAT providers.

Stage 3

The OSAT centre will arrange to come to see you to discuss your situation in greater detail.

Stage 4

Roofing operatives are briefed on the OSAT process and undergo a skills review.

Stage 5

The roofing operative follows an individual action plan to fill any skills gaps, and is assessed as they go along.

Stage 6

Once successfully completed, an N/SVQ is awarded. When combined with a health and safety test pass, the roofing operative is eligible for a CSCS card.

Throughout this process, additional support is available from ConstructionSkills and your OSAT centre. This might include providing your staff with presentations on OSAT, providing advice on N/SVQs or help with claiming grant.

The options available to you

As an employer, there are various ways you can start OSAT. The three main options are:

1. Your roofing company buys in the full on-site assessment and training package from an existing OSAT centre. This is the most commonly followed option, particularly for small firms.
2. Your roofing company works in partnership with an OSAT centre to share the delivery process.
3. Your roofing company becomes an accredited assessment centre and carries out the OSAT process completely in-house. This tends to be suited to large roofing companies who already have an in-house training facility.

We'll be able to help you decide which option is best for you.

OSAT costs and grants available

On-site assessment and training centre fees can vary, depending upon circumstances. Also, some OSAT centres' costs include N/SVQ fees; others may charge separately.

To ensure you qualify for grants, please contact your local ConstructionSkills area office before training starts.

NB: All roofing trades in scope are included in this scheme.

Is OSAT right for you?

On-site assessment and training is just one of many training solutions available through ConstructionSkills. Others include apprenticeship schemes and a range of courses run through the various colleges.

For the more experienced worker there is the option of the Experienced Worker Practical Assessment (EWPA). This is currently available for roof slating & tiling and roof sheeting & cladding but the other roofing trades are in various stages of development.

This N/SVQ assessment method has been introduced as an alternative for the experienced worker, with experience across the range of work. Accredited assessment centres will be able to use this method to assess experienced candidates who would prefer to demonstrate their competence using a one-off practical assessment as opposed to the current method of observation on site. This method is not being introduced to replace existing assessment methods, but to offer an alternative. It is currently being offered by:

ARM Training Services in the North West
 Fildes Roofing Ltd in the South
 Sandtoft Roofing in the Yorkshire area
 South Wales and South West Roofing Training Group in Wales and the South West
 (See section 12 for contact details)

Our aim is to ensure you have a properly skilled and qualified workforce.

To get started on OSAT or to find out more about any other ConstructionSkills services, please call one of the following numbers:

Scotland East 0131 443 8893
 Scotland North 01463 222893
 Scotland West 0141 810 3044
 Wales 01656 655226
 East 01582 727462

Midlands 01509 610266
 North East & Cumbria 0191 516 3900
 North West 01744 616004
 Southern Counties 02380 623 0505
 South West 01392 440900

Greater London 0207 600 7700

Yorkshire & Humber 0113 252 1966

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