



Association of Concrete Industrial Flooring Contractors

# QUALIFYING YOUR WORKFORCE

## In Situ Concrete Flooring



# INTRODUCTION

The construction industry is working towards a fully qualified workforce by 2010, which means that, if you work on projects or sites run by the biggest contractors, housebuilders or local authorities, your employees and sub-contractors are increasingly likely to require the appropriate CSCS cards to gain access to site.

This ACIFC guidance note explains the qualification structure for the concrete industrial flooring sector and will help you qualify your workforce.

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## CHECKLIST FOR QUALIFICATION

1. Develop a **Training and Development Plan** to identify and map out the training needs of all your employees
2. For each operative requiring a CSCS card, book and pass the operative **Health and Safety Test**
3. Contact Forum Training to organise an NVQ assessor to register for the appropriate NVQ in *Specialist Concrete Operations (In Situ Flooring)* and undergo an **NVQ profile or 'skills match'**
4. Complete and submit the CSCS application form for an **Experienced Worker card**
5. Use the **ACIFC Training Programme** and/or Forum Training to fill any skills gaps
6. Follow the **OSAT process** to obtain the NVQ
7. Complete and submit the CSCS application form for a **Skilled Worker card** in *In Situ Flooring – Concrete*
8. Make sure you specify the appropriate NVQ **endorsement** of layer, finisher or plant operator on the CSCS application form under section B
9. Claim **ConstructionSkills grants** for successfully completing the Health and Safety Test; registering for the NVQ and undergoing a 'skills match'; and obtaining the NVQ
10. Claim **funding from NSCC** for obtaining the CSCS Skilled Worker card

## CSCS

Experienced operatives in the concrete flooring trade will usually require blue CSCS Skilled Worker cards in the occupation *In Situ Flooring – Concrete*. Following the end of industry accreditation ('grandfather rights') in 2004, to obtain this card, all operatives must achieve an NVQ level 2 in *Specialist Concrete Occupations (In Situ Flooring)* via one of 3 routes:

- Concrete Layer – NVQ reference QUI 764
- Concrete Finisher – QUJ 764
- Concrete Plant Operator – QUK 764.

The appropriate NVQ route is listed on the reverse of all *In Situ Flooring – Concrete* Skilled Worker cards. By indicating the operative's skills in this way, you can demonstrate that they are competent for the work that they are doing on site.

### Obtaining cards

Achieving an NVQ takes time and CSCS offers an Experienced Worker card, which experienced operatives can hold for up to a year whilst working towards their NVQ. On achievement of the NVQ, the Experienced Worker card is converted into a Skilled Worker card. Experienced Worker cards are blue with EXPERIENCED WORKER on the front and the occupation on the reverse.



Experienced Worker cards are valid for one year from the date of issue and cannot be renewed. By the time the card expires, the operative must have achieved an NVQ level 2 in order to obtain a Skilled Worker card. The Construction Site Operative or Basic Skills Green card (equivalent to NVQ level 1) is not an alternative to the Experienced Worker card, and an operative will not be able to replace an expired Experienced Worker card with the Basic Skills Green card.



Tel: 0870 417 8777 [www.cscs.uk.com](http://www.cscs.uk.com)

ACIFC is working in partnership with Forum Training to help members qualify their workforces, which means a CSCS Experienced Worker card can be obtained quickly and simply as follows:

1. Download the CSCS application form from [www.cscs.uk.com](http://www.cscs.uk.com).
2. Pass the appropriate Health and Safety Test (see *Health and Safety Test*).
3. Contact Forum Training on **0844 249 9178** to register for the appropriate NVQ level 2 in *Specialist Concrete Occupations (In Situ Flooring)*.
4. Undergo an NVQ profile or 'skills match' with the NVQ assessor which can be provided by Forum Training.
5. Complete the CSCS application form and submit to CSCS along with a passport photo and payment of £25 for the Experienced Worker card.  
*On the application form, the employer will be required to sign a declaration that the operative has worked in the occupation on site for at least one year within the last three years. The assessor will sign section C.*
6. Await the issue of a CSCS Experienced Worker card, which should take approximately 28 days.



Tel: 0844 249 9178 [www.forumtraining.com](http://www.forumtraining.com)

## Converting Experienced Worker cards

To convert an Experienced Worker card into a Skilled Worker card, an operative in the concrete flooring trade must achieve an NVQ level 2 in *Specialist Concrete Occupations (In Situ Flooring)* via the Onsite Assessment and Training (OSAT) process (see *NVQ Process*).

The NVQ together with a pass in the Health and Safety Test will allow the operative to apply for a CSCS Skilled Worker card, which will be valid for 5 years.

When applying for a Skilled Worker card in the occupation *In Situ Flooring – Concrete*, operatives will need to specify on the CSCS application form under section B the NVQ route taken (i.e. layer, finisher or plant operator) to ensure that the appropriate endorsement is printed on the reverse of the card.

## Health and Safety Test

To obtain a CSCS card, an operative must pass the construction Health and Safety Test appropriate to the CSCS occupation. For *In Situ Flooring – Concrete*, the basic operative Health and Safety Test is required.

To book the Health and Safety Test, call **0870 600 4020**.

When preparing for the test, operatives should ensure that they are using the latest edition of the 'Questions & Answers' book.

## NVQ PROCESS

When registering an operative for the NVQ, the NVQ assessor which can be provided by Forum Training will carry out a profile or 'skills match' to identify the skills that the operative already possesses. The assessor will then develop an action plan to fill any skills gaps. Each operative follows an individual action plan at their own speed with the assessor monitoring and supporting their progress. For a genuinely experienced operative, the NVQ process can take as little as 4 or 5 visits to site over a period of less than 6 months.



If appropriate funding can be obtained, there will be no charge from Forum Training for the NVQ qualification – for further information, phone Forum Training on 0844 249 9178.

## Onsite Assessment and Training (OSAT)

The NVQ is achieved via the Onsite Assessment and Training (OSAT) process. OSAT enables an operative to obtain the NVQ whilst working on site. Existing skills count towards the NVQ and, unless further specific training is required, the entire NVQ process is carried out on site which minimises downtime. The OSAT process is even quicker when employers provide support to operatives and this will be explained by the assessor.

## **1. Induction and profiling with NVQ assessor**

The NVQ assessor will introduce the operative to the OSAT process and make an initial assessment of their skills. The assessor will explain what needs to be done to prove that the operative has the required skills and set up a folder, in which to keep the evidence gathered by the operative. If any skills gaps are identified, the assessor will offer advice on training.

## **2. Gathering of evidence**

The following will be collected as evidence to prove that the operative has the necessary skills for the NVQ:

- Answering questions from the assessor
- Evidence of qualifications such as certificates
- Documents including plans, letters to customers and risk assessments
- Photos of the operative carrying out work
- Timesheets
- Employer or supervisor witness testimonials.

## **3. Further assessment**

The assessor will come back on a regular basis to check the operative's progress and review the evidence gathered. The operative will be observed by the assessor whilst they work, and a further assessment will be carried out to identify which areas need more work.

## **4. On-going gathering of evidence and assessment**

The assessor may need to return 4 or 5 times until the operative has gathered the evidence required for each unit of the NVQ. Once the assessor has evidence for all the units, they will submit it to the assessment centre such as Forum Training.

## **5. Obtaining of NVQ**

The NVQ will be awarded and the operative will receive an NVQ certificate. On receipt of the certificate, the operative can apply to CSCS to convert their Experienced Worker card into a Skilled Worker card for a fee of £25 after passing the Health and Safety Test.

## ACIFC TRAINING PROGRAMME

ACIFC has developed a series of training courses on the safe operation of items of plant specific to the concrete flooring industry. Successful completion of one of the courses on the ACIFC Training Programme can be used as evidence towards the appropriate NVQ module.

Under the ACIFC Training Programme, ACIFC offers training on the following types of machine:

Machine	NVQ module
Laser Screed	Plant operator – Operate plant/machinery to lay and distribute
Topping Spreader	Plant operator – Operate plant/machinery to lay and distribute
Power Trowel – Ride On	Finisher – Apply surface finish to concrete flooring
Power Trowel – Walk Behind	Finisher – Apply surface finish to concrete flooring
Fibre Integration Machine – Blower	Layer – Manual placement of in situ concrete flooring
Fibre Integration Machine – Conveyor	Layer – Manual placement of in situ concrete flooring

For further information or to organise training, contact ACIFC on **0844 249 9176**.

## FUNDING

### ConstructionSkills grants

Companies registered with ConstructionSkills can claim grant for carrying out training, achieving NVQs, and passing the Health and Safety Test – even if they are not required to pay a levy contribution.

If you are carrying out training, you should be claiming ConstructionSkills grant. You may wish to consider developing a Training and Development Plan to map out the training needs of all your employees for the year and obtain grant for a range of training. Please note that you cannot claim grant for both a Training and Development Plan and short duration training in the same grant scheme year.

For advice and assistance in claiming grant, contact your local ConstructionSkills office which can be identified by calling the ConstructionSkills National Specialist Team on **01509 282857** or visiting **[www.cskills.org](http://www.cskills.org)**.



Tel: 01509 282857 [www.cskills.org](http://www.cskills.org)

Training	Grant code	Amount of grant	How to claim
<b>Health and Safety Test</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passing the Health and Safety Test</li> </ul>	A30	Amount equal to cost of test	Complete claim form
<b>NVQ via OSAT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paying for and producing individual's agreed action plan on Skillmatch</li> <li>• Achieving NVQ level 2</li> </ul>	A34A	£100 (1st instalment)	Claim form sent
	A34B	£500 (2nd instalment)	
<b>Short duration off the job training</b> Undertaking courses directly related to construction industry activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One day or more (min of 6 hours per day during normal working hours)</li> <li>• Half day for health, safety and/or environmental subjects only (min 3 hours)</li> </ul>	B201	£35 a day per person	Complete claim form
	B202	£17.50 a day per person	
<b>Training and Development Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producing a Training and Development Plan</li> <li>• Undertaking training included within plan with minimum of 30 minutes duration</li> </ul>	B101	£10 per employee min £500 per employer	Contact local Construction-Skills office
	B102	£27.50 a day per person from 2008/09 grant scheme year	

## Supplementary funding from NSCC

As a result of ACIFC's membership of NSCC, ACIFC members are able to claim funding for achieving CSCS Skilled Worker cards for their workforces via the NVQ route. For every Skilled Worker card you have obtained via NVQ level 2 or above since January 2007, you can claim additional funding. All you have to do is:

1. Go to [www.nsc.org.uk](http://www.nsc.org.uk) and click on 'I am qualifying my workforce'
2. Enter your company details
3. List all your workers that have achieved CSCS Skilled Worker cards via NVQ level 2 or above since January 2007
4. For each worker enter the following information:
  - Candidate name
  - Candidate number (CSCS number)
  - CSCS occupation
  - Name of assessor
  - NVQ level achieved
5. Submit your claim.



All applications will be verified prior to funding being paid by NSCC. Claims that meet the criteria for the project can take up to 6 weeks. Claims which do not meet the criteria will not be eligible for funding.

You do not have to be in-scope of ConstructionSkills to claim the funding and in each case it will be you as the employer of the operative that has achieved the card that will receive the funding.



Tel: 0844 249 5351 [www.nsc.org.uk](http://www.nsc.org.uk)

## USEFUL CONTACTS

<p><b>ACIFC</b> Offers a dedicated training advisor for all training enquiries as well as training on plant specific to the trade</p>	<p><b>0844 249 9176</b> <b>www.acifc.org</b></p>
<p><b>ConstructionSkills – National Specialist Team</b> Provides local offices to deal with all grant enquiries</p>	<p><b>01509 282857</b> <b>www.cskills.org</b></p>
<p><b>CSCS helpline</b> For all CSCS card enquiries</p>	<p><b>0870 417 8777</b> <b>www.cscs.uk.com</b></p>
<p><b>Forum Training</b> An NVQ assessment centre for the in situ concrete flooring trade</p>	<p><b>0844 249 9178</b> <b>www.forumtraining.com</b></p>
<p><b>Health and Safety Test</b> Booking centre for the Health and Safety Test</p>	<p><b>0870 600 4020</b> <b>www.cscs.uk.com</b></p>
<p><b>NSCC</b> Offers funding for the achievement of CSCS cards via NVQ level 2 and above</p>	<p><b>0844 249 5351</b> <b>www.nsc.org.uk</b></p>

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