



Guidance Note: CSCS Cards

Most major contractors and homebuilders require their workforce to hold a valid CSCS card as a demonstration of their commitment to safe and efficient working.

To attain a CSCS card operatives must achieve a nationally recognised qualification (such as National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)) which provide contractors with the assurance that the holder has the skills, knowledge, training, and experience to carry out the task(s) for which they are appointed.

CSCS cards (or equivalents) alone, may not provide sufficient evidence that a worker has the right skills, knowledge, training, and experience to undertake their role. Operatives may be asked to provide additional evidence of skills, knowledge, training, and experience.

There are many types of CSCS card depending on the card holder's occupation or job role. ATLAS and SLPTG have developed a **Guide to CSCS cards for the Lightning Protection and Steeplejack Industry** to help identify what card to use.

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Card Types for the Lightning Protection and Steeplejack Sector

1. Red PROVISIONAL card

The red PROVISIONAL card is available for workers on probation, a work experience programme or pre-apprenticeship programme.

All applicants must have passed the relevant Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years.

Cards are valid for six months and are non-renewable. Applicants must register for, or achieve an industry recognised qualification prior to their card expiring.

2. Red APPRENTICE card

The red APPRENTICE card is available if the applicant is registered on an industry recognised apprenticeship scheme and has passed the relevant Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years. The apprentice will also need to supply CSCS with an email from the NCC – East Apprenticeship Officer confirming that they are registered for the next apprenticeship intake. Apprentices which do not apply for a card before they begin the apprenticeship, will be taken through the proves during their college induction.

Cards are valid for four years and are non-renewable. Applicants must complete their Apprenticeship prior to their card expiring.

3. Red TRAINEE Card

A red TRAINEE (Craft and Operative) card is available for trainees who are registered for an S/NVQ but have not yet achieved the qualification.

All applicants must have passed the relevant Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years.

Cards are valid for a maximum of two years and are non-renewable. Applicants will need to have achieved a relevant S/NVQ, prior to their card expiring.

4. Red EXPERIENCED WORKER card

A red EXPERIENCED WORKER card is available to applicants with on the job experience.

The card is issued on a temporary basis while an S/NVQ is being achieved. It is expected to be replaced by a blue SKILLED WORKER card on achievement of an S/NVQ.

All applicants must have passed the relevant Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years.

Cards are valid for a maximum of one year and are non-renewable. Applicants will need to have achieved a relevant S/NVQ, prior to their card expiring.

5. Blue SKILLED WORKER card

The blue SKILLED WORKER card is available if the applicant has achieved an S/NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) – Lightning Conductor Engineer or Steeplejack and has passed the Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years.

Cards are valid for five years and are renewable.

6. Gold ADVANCED CRAFT / SUPERVISORY card

The gold ADVANCED CRAFT / SUPERVISORY card is available if the applicant has achieved an S/NVQ Level 3 Diploma in Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) - Lightning Conductor Engineer; Lightning Protective Systems Inspection and Testing or Steeplejack and has passed the Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test (advanced craft) or Supervisors Test (supervisors' card) within the last 2 years.

Cards are valid for five years and are renewable.

7. Black MANAGER card

The black MANAGER card is available if the applicant has achieved an S/NVQ Level 3 Diploma in Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) – Lightning Conductor Engineer Lightning Protective Systems Inspection and Testing or Steeplejack and / or a relevant S/NVQ Level 4/ 5 Management qualification and has passed the Health, Safety and Environment and Supervisors Test within the last 2 years.

Cards are valid for five years and are renewable.

Renewing an LC or SJ Skilled Worker Card

From **Monday 2 November 2015**, operatives renewing a **Lightning Conductor Engineer** or **Steeplejack blue or gold Skilled Worker card**, will be required to attend an ATLAS endorsed course. These one-day courses are:

- **Steeplejacks – Anchors for Steeplejacks**
- **Lightning Conductor Engineers – Working at Height for Lightning Conductor Engineers.**

These changes apply to **all** skilled operatives whether they achieved their card by NVQ qualification or industry accreditation.

Those applying for a blue or gold Skilled Worker card for the first time will not be required to attend an endorsed course; they will only require the relevant NVQ.

What do I need to do to renew my card?

Anyone renewing their card will be required to provide:

- a certificate for the relevant ATLAS endorsed course which has been completed in the past 2 years
- their renewal application form

- confirmation that they have passed the Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test
- the CSCS card renewal fee.

Anyone renewing their card after **2020** will be asked to demonstrate that they hold the relevant NVQ for their occupation. This includes operatives which achieved their card via Industry Accreditation. **CSCS is working with industry to establish what this will mean. It is expected that anyone with 'Industry Accreditation Route A or B' will need to be working towards a relevant NVQ by 2020. Further guidance will be provided as it becomes available.**

To renew a card, operatives should contact the CSCS helpline. Operatives should make sure they have their certificate, employer's details and a valid debit or credit card to hand before calling to renew their card.

Employers applying for cards on behalf of their employees can complete and return the [CSCS Employer Application Form](#) via [email](#).

How do I find a course?

A full list of endorsed course providers is available on the [ATLAS website](#).

Operatives and their employers should contact the Training Provider directly to arrange attendance at the relevant endorsed course.

Only certificates from endorsed course providers on this list will be accepted by CSCS.

Operatives should attend the course in the 2 years before renewing their card.

I can't attend the course before my renewal date

Operatives will be required to attend the relevant endorsed course before their renewal will be processed.

To avoid any gap in their card, operatives are advised to attend the relevant endorsed course as soon as they are able to and up to 2 years prior to their renewal.

I have changed occupation

If you have changed occupation or have moved to a management card, the changes will not apply to you. You will need to notify CSCS of the change to your occupation and apply for the relevant card.

ATLAS Endorsed Course Providers

Training Providers which would like to apply for Endorsed Course status should review the [Information for Course Providers document](#) and return the completed application form and accompanying documentation to [Sarah Wicks](#).

Frequently asked Questions

What qualifications are relevant to the lightning protection and steeplejack industry?

Operatives qualified in the Lightning Protection or Steeplejack sectors should hold the S/NVQ Level 2 in Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Lightning Conductor Engineering or Steeplejacking and obtain the blue CSCS Skilled Worker card in the relevant occupation.

There are three additional qualifications available within the sector, which qualify operatives for the gold CSCS Skilled Worker Card.

- S/NVQ Level 3 Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Lightning Conductor Engineer
- S/NVQ Level 3 Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Lightning Protective Systems Inspection and Testing
- S/NVQ Level 3 Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Steeplejack.

How do I achieve an S/NVQ?

Depending on the level of experience and competence of the operative, there are a number of training routes available to obtain an S/NVQ:

- **A new entrant with no previous experience in construction**
Two apprenticeship programmes for Lightning Protection Engineers and Steeplejacks are available at the National Construction College (NCC) East at the Bircham Newton residential campus.
- **Experienced steeplejack and lightning protection operatives**
Experienced operatives can register to receive training and / or assessment via an experienced Worker Practical Assessment (EWPA) or Onsite Assessment and Training (OSAT). When registering an experienced operative for an S/NVQ, a training provider will carry out a pre-course interview to assess and profile the operative's existing skills and assign them to the appropriate training route.
- **Operatives with experience in lightning protection, but limited knowledge of inspection and testing**
A Specialist Upskilling Programme (SUP) for the S/NVQ Level 3 Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Lightning Protective Systems Inspection and Testing.

For further details of the training available visit the [SLPTG Website](#) or call 0844 249 0023.

What if I don't have an S/NVQ qualification?

Industry Accreditation **has closed for new entrants** to the lightning protection and steeplejack sector.

There are a number of existing card holders who have not achieved an S/NVQ but who achieved industry accreditation. The **Blue SKILLED WORKER card** referred to as industry accreditation Grade A and the **Gold ADVANCED CRAFT / SUPERVISORY card** is referred to as industry accreditation Grade B.

Anyone renewing their card after **2020** will be asked to demonstrate that they hold the relevant NVQ for their occupation. This includes operatives which achieved their card via Industry Accreditation. **CSCS is working with industry to establish what this will mean. It is expected that anyone with 'Industry Accreditation Route A or B' will need to be working towards a relevant NVQ by 2020. Further guidance will be provided as it becomes available.**

CSCS has not yet advised how this requirement will affect operatives with an indentured apprenticeship (those whose cards state Assessed Route A or B on the back) before the introduction of NVQs. It is anticipated that the operative may need to provide details of the apprenticeship and subsequent training and that it has met the requirement of the modern day NVQ. It is hoped that this will have the minimum impact for operatives completed their apprenticeship before the introduction of NVQs.

The renewal of existing cards achieved via industry accreditation is subject to successfully completing the Health, Safety, and Environment and Working at Height Test.

How do I apply for my first CSCS card?

To apply for a first CSCS card operatives will need to:

- demonstrate that they have achieved the recognised qualifications required
- pass the relevant Health, Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test
- submit a signed application form
- pay the relevant fee.

Card applications can be made by telephone on 0344 994 4777 and paid for by credit or debit card. Application by telephone are processed the next working day.

Card applications can also be made by post. An application form is available on the [CSCS website](#) and payment can be made by cheque. Postal applications will be processed within 30 days.

What do I do if I have changed occupation?

Apply for a CSCS card for a new occupation in the same way as your first card (see above), enclosing evidence that you have achieved the recognised qualification(s) required for your new occupation or that you are registered to study the recognised qualification.

All of the candidate's formal qualifications are listed on the back of all operative CSCS cards.

Is a CSCS card all I need to demonstrate my competence?

Sole reliance should not be placed on industry certification cards or similar being presented as evidence that a worker has the right skills, knowledge, training, and experience.

When reviewing a member of the workforce, contractors/ employers should make enquiries to ensure the individual has the skills, knowledge, training and experience to carry out the work they will be employed to do in a way that secures health and safety for everyone working on the site.

Please review the [Build UK Training Standard](#) for further information.

What other training can I record on my CSCS card to demonstrate my competence?

A number of endorsements are available on SJ and LC skilled worker cards, which demonstrate the additional skills which steeplejacks and lightning conductor engineers often have. The full list of endorsements available and how to apply for these is listed below:

Endorsement	When is the Endorsement Available?	How To Apply
Rope Access (Bosun's Seat)	Application or Renewal	Provide proof that module 2108 K/S (QCF 255) Bosun's Seat has been completed (available through the NVQ Level 2 Lightning Conductor Engineer or Steeplejack)

What is a labourer within the lightning protection sector?

LABOURERS assist a skilled Lightning Conductor Engineer in performing their tasks. This should include unskilled work only and all work should be overseen by a skilled operative at all times. Labourers should be trained in basic health and safety skills and due to the nature of the work they are assisting with, they should successfully complete the CITB Health Safety and Environment and Working at Height Test. Clients are also likely to request that the labourer has undertaken industry-recognised training in working at heights.

Labourers should not use specialised access equipment such as Bosun's seats or industrial ropes.

All work carried out by a LABOURER must be classed as unskilled, and this may include:

- carrying, positioning and dismantling scaffolding and access equipment but not erecting it for use. Erection must only be undertaken by skilled workers and not even supervised working is permitted
- digging trenches for installation of lightning conductor tapes and conductor rods but not the driving of the rods or the laying of the tape. Installation must only be undertaken by skilled workers and not even supervised installation is permitted
- bringing plant and materials to skilled operatives but not to areas where access can only be obtained through the use of specialised access equipment. Specialist access

equipment can only be used by skilled workers and not even supervised use is permitted.

What is a labourer within the steeplejack sector?

Due to the specialist nature of the work undertaken by a steeplejack, there is no recognised labourers role in this sector.

Are labourers, apprentices, trainees, and provisional workers permitted on a main contractor's site if they are accompanied by a skilled worker with a relevant CSCS card?

Only if they hold the correct CSCS card for their role:

- Labourer – green LABOURER card
- Apprentice – red APPRENTICE card
- Trainee – red TRAINEE (CRAFT / OPERATIVE) card
- Provisional Worker – red PROVISIONAL WORKER card.

As these are unskilled operatives or operatives working towards the achievement of an industry recognised qualification, they should be supervised/ accompanied by a Skilled Worker with the correct CSCS at all times.

Which card does an operative require if he is supervising the work of others or leading a job on site?

Front line/ trade supervisors working on site with direct responsibility for putting people to work will typically brief their workers on how to carry out their work and ensure they are carrying out their work safely. These operatives must demonstrate they have the necessary knowledge and skills to supervise workers effectively.

The relevant card for this role is a gold ADVANCED CRAFT / SUPERVISORY card which demonstrate the operative has:

- achieved a Construction Related NVQ or SVQ level 3 or level 4 with a Craft or Supervisory title
- and passed the CITB Health Safety and Environment and Working at Height (Advanced Craft card) or Supervisors Test (Supervisory card).

I have recently employed an operative with no previous experience within the sector. He had a CSCS red provisional card with his previous employer and is unable to get another one. What is the relevant CSCS card for him?

The employer can register the operative for an S/NVQ in the relevant occupation and the operative would then be eligible for a red TRAINEE (CRAFT AND OPERATIVE), APPRENTICE or EXPERIENCED WORKER card.

If the Employer is unable to register them for an S/NVQ at this stage, they can appeal to CSCS under the following terms:

- If their red PROVISIONAL card relates to the same occupation – employers should appeal to CSCS and ask for an extension due to the operative changing employer

- If their red PROVISIONAL card relates to a different occupation – employers should appeal to CSCS for a second red PROVISIONAL card due to extenuating circumstances

Speak to the CSCS Contact Centre 0344 994 4777 for further advice and guidance.

Contact CSCS

CSCS Helpline: 0344 994 4777 (8:00am to 6:00pm Monday – Friday)

PO Box 114
Bircham Newton
King's Lynn
PE31 6XD

customerservice@cscs.gb.com

www.cscs.uk.com



ATLAS

A GUIDE TO CSCS CARDS FOR THE LIGHTNING PROTECTION AND STEEPLEJACK INDUSTRY

Do you carry out work within the Steeplejack or Lightning Protection Sector?

YES

NO

Visit www.cscs.uk.com/cardfinder to find the correct card and HS&E Test for your occupation

Do you have a CSCS card?

NO

YES

Are you a labourer?

NO

YES

Are you renewing a Lightning Conductor Engineer CSCS card?

Are you renewing a Steeplejack CSCS card?

YES

YES

You must have completed an industry recognised Working at Heights for Lightning Conductor Engineer course within the last 2 years

You must have completed an industry recognised Anchors for Steeplejacks course within the last 2 years

Ensure you pass your HS&E and Working at Height Test and renew your card in plenty of time

LABOURER
You must have passed the HS&E and Working at Height Test within the last two years
AND
Achieved a CSCS recognised health and safety qualification such as:
The QCF / SQCF Level 1 Award Health and Safety in a Construction Environment
OR
The one day Site Safety Plus Health and Safety Awareness Course.
A full list of courses is available at www.cscs.uk.com/greencard
Apply for (or renew) a green LABOURER card
VALID FOR 5 YEARS – RENEWABLE

APPRENTICE
You must be registered on an industry recognised apprenticeship scheme and have passed the HS&E and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years (unless you have completed a one-day health and safety awareness course as part of your apprenticeship induction)
Apply for a red APPRENTICE card
VALID FOR 4 YEARS - NON RENEWABLE
You will need to complete your Apprenticeship prior to your card expiring

EXPERIENCED WORKER
You must have passed the HS&E and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years
Register for the relevant S/NVQ for your occupation
Apply for a red EXPERIENCED WORKER card
VALID FOR 12 MONTHS - NON RENEWABLE
You will need to achieve the relevant NVQ or SVQ prior to your card expiring

TRAINEE (CRAFT AND OPERATIVE)
You must have passed the HS&E and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years
Register for the relevant S/NVQ for your occupation
Apply for a red TRAINEE (CRAFT AND OPERATIVE) card
VALID FOR 3 YEARS - NON RENEWABLE
You will need to complete your Apprenticeship prior to your card expiring

PROVISIONAL
You must have passed the HS&E and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years
Apply for a red PROVISIONAL card
VALID FOR 6 MONTHS - NON RENEWABLE
You will need to register for or achieve an industry recognised qualification prior to your card expiring

SKILLED WORKER
You must have passed the HS&E and Working at Height Test within the last 2 years
Apply for a blue SKILLED WORKER card
VALID FOR 5 YEARS - RENEWABLE

ADVANCED CRAFT / SUPERVISORY
You must have passed the HS&E and Working at Height or Supervisor Test within the last 2 years
Apply for a gold ADVANCED CRAFT / SUPERVISORY card
VALID FOR 5 YEARS- RENEWABLE

MANAGER Level 5, 6, 7
You must have passed the HS&E and Supervisor Test within the last 2 years
Apply for a black MANAGER card
VALID FOR 5 YEARS- RENEWABLE

Do you hold an S/NVQ Level 2 in Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Lightning Conductor Engineering or Steeplejacking?

Do you hold an S/NVQ Level 3 in Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction) Lightning Conductor Engineering or Lightning Protective Systems Inspection and Testing or Steeplejacking? AND / OR a relevant S/NVQ Level 3 or 4 supervisor qualification?

Do you hold a relevant S/NVQ Level 5, 6 or 7 management qualification?

Do you hold an NVQ relevant to an occupation within the Lightning Protection or Steeplejack sector?

Are you registered or could you register for an industry recognised Apprenticeship?

Do you have on the job experience of at least 1 year in the last 3 years?

Are you new to the Lightning Protection or Steeplejack Sector?

Call the CSCS Contact Centre on 0344 994 4777 to find the right qualification for your occupation
YOU MAY FIND YOU CANNOT GAIN ACCESS TO CONSTRUCTION SITES WITHOUT THE RIGHT CSCS CARD

YES

NO

YES

NO

YES

NO

NO

Craft / Trade

Work experience or on probation

NOTES

- All HS&E Tests cost £19.50
- All CSCS cards cost £30.00
- Card applications can be made by telephone on 0344 994 4777 and paid for by credit card or debit card. Applications by telephone are processed by the next working day
- Card applications can also be made by post. Download an application form from [CSCS](http://www.cscs.uk) and pay by cheque. Applications by post are processed within 30 days
- Contact CSCS on 0344 994 4777.