

Covid-19

Impact on CSCS applications

17 March 2020

The growing concerns surrounding Coronavirus (COVID-19) are likely to impact CSCS's ability to issue cards to some 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 across the UK will temporarily close from Friday 20 March 2020 until further notice. The situation will be monitored on a weekly basis.

At present CITB are not closing the Independent Test Centre (ITC) network and they will continue to work with these centres to ensure adequate precautionary measures are put in place to protect staff and candidates.

Please visit the [CITB website](#) regarding the actions they are taking around the availability of the HS&E test and other industry training.

CSCS and the wider industry should therefore consider the impact Coronavirus will have 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, we should prepare for the fact that construction workers will struggle to find availability to sit the test and the likelihood that the remaining test centres will also close 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:

1. 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 and who can provide evidence that they have been unable to sit their test or undertake the required training as a result of the closure of Test/Training centres.

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

2. 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 H,S&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.

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 you to visit www.cscs.co.uk/covid19 regularly for updates from CSCS.

Any enquiries related to this matter should be emailed to communications@cscs.co.uk