

1. Introduction

These scheme rules describe the Cert-ain Certification Ltd. (CCL) requirements for the certification of an individual under the Nationally Accredited Certification Scheme for Individual Gas Fitting Operatives (ACS).

2. Scope

The scheme rules only apply to the assessment and certification process. They do not apply to any training taken prior to the assessment. Training is not a pre-requisite for assessment.

The scheme shall assess an individual's competence to carry out gas work safely. It is not intended to assess competence in other areas of work.

3. Impartiality

CCL is committed to ensuring the impartiality of the certification process. Impartial assessment shall be available to all eligible applicants.

CCL shall identify and address any actual or perceived conflicts of interest in order to ensure and maintain the objectivity of its certification activities.

It is not implied that certification would be easier, simpler, or cheaper should the candidate use any particular education or training service.

Applicants are invited to indicate any specific requirements that they wish to be taken into consideration at the time of application.

CCL shall take all reasonable steps to offer methods of assessment that provide for the needs of individuals with learning and physical difficulties without compromising the assessment standards.

4. Assessment scheme

The current scope of assessment for which CCL is accredited can be obtained from the UKAS website, www.ukas.com and are grouped into general work areas comprising of:

- Domestic natural gas appliances, pipe-work and meters;
- Non-domestic appliances, pipe-work and meters;
- Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) domestic appliances, pipe-work and meters;
- Emergency service provider and meter installer.

First time applicants under this scheme shall take initial assessment(s). Applicants renewing their assessments may be eligible to take re-assessment.

Applicants undertaking re-assessment are eligible for the 'MOT style' certification process which enables applicants to undertake re-assessment up to six months prior to the expiry date of their 'initial' ACS certificates.

The scheme assessment criteria is developed and agreed by the Standard Setting Function for Gas Safe Registration.

5. Application

ACS Guidance Note 8 details the various applicant entry routes – further advice is also available from the assessment centre.

Applications shall be made on the application/result form which requires:

- the applicant name, address and National Insurance number;
- 2 passport sized photographs of the applicant (First-time applicants will also be required to provide an acceptable form of photographic identification e.g. a passport or driving licence);
- a declaration of the applicant entry route (see ACS Guidance Note 8)
- copies of the applicants' relevant qualifications and if applicable, evidence of gas work experience and/or a witness testimony (see ACS Guidance Note 8).

Applicants must declare:

- whether they have had a gas safety competency certificate or qualification withdrawn, or;
- whether they have been deemed incompetent in matters of gas safety in the past;
- any known conflicts of interest or any threats to the impartiality of the assessment and certification process.

Applicants must not carry out gas work unless they hold a valid gas safety certificate for that work category and that they must be employed by a gas installation business that is registered with Gas Safe Register or is registered as a sole trader with Gas Safe Register before undertaking such work that is within the scope of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations.

6. Conduct

When attending the assessment centre, individuals are required to conduct themselves in a suitable manner and adhere to the instructions given to them, particularly in relation to the requirement to work safely without endangering themselves or others.

Candidates undertaking assessment shall not release confidential examination materials or participate in any fraudulent test-taking practices e.g. colluding with other candidates, using mobile phones or unauthorised electronic aids, or unauthorised notes or reference materials.

Inappropriate conduct, physical or verbal abuse, any form of harassment or discrimination may result in termination of the assessment and the subsequent loss of any fees paid.

7. Assessment process

Individuals are required to demonstrate their competence in areas of gas safety by completing practical assessments in a realistic working environment and/or written assessments, normally based in a classroom environment. Where necessary, the individual may also be orally questioned by the assessor. (The pass-mark for the assessments is 100%).

8. Certification process

The assessment centre will normally inform individuals of the 'assessment recommendation' within 10 working days of the completion of their assessment.

The 'assessment recommendation' will be transmitted to CCL (Assessment centres can only recommend certification; the final certification decision rests with CCL).

CCL will subsequently make the certification decision and aim to provide successful individuals with certification and download the information to Gas Safe, normally within 20 working days of receipt of correctly completed paperwork from the assessment centre.

Although given in good faith, times quoted for the provision of the certification service are intended as estimates only and are not to be treated as being part of the contractual agreement with the applicant.

Unless CCL has a specific formal arrangement with an applicant, certificates will be issued directly to the applicant. The certificate always remains the property of CCL.

Replacement or duplicate certificates can be obtained from CCL for a fee, paid in advance.

9. Fast-track certification

Individuals can opt for 'fast-track' certification for the payment of an additional administration fee to the assessment centre. The fast-track certification process will provide a 3-working day turnaround from the completion of the assessment to the issue of the certificate and download of the result to the gas registration body (providing the information is complete and correct).

10. Certificate holder agreement

By completing and signing the assessment application form, the candidate (certified person) shall agree:

- to declare to the centre manager or CCL, prior to the assessment taking place, any risks or conflicts of interest that may affect the impartiality of the assessment process;
- to comply with the relevant provisions of the certification scheme and with these scheme rules;
- to make claims regarding certification only with respect to the scope for which certification has been granted;
- not to use the certification in such a manner as to bring the certification body into disrepute, and not to make any statement regarding the certification which the certification body considers misleading or unauthorised;
- to discontinue the use of all claims to certification that contain any reference to the certification body or certification upon suspension or withdrawal of certification, and to return any certificates issued by the certification body;
- not to use the certificate in a misleading manner.

11. Suspension or withdrawal of certification

Where a certificate holder is deemed to be acting contrary to the scheme rules and requirements, CCL may at its discretion suspend or withdraw all or part of that certificate. Certificated individuals are required to:

- comply with the relevant provisions of the certification scheme;
- always work competently in the areas of certification;
- maintain competence throughout the period of certification;
- not misuse the certificate;
- not misuse the CCL trademark or logo;
- show the certificate where required to do so;
- pay the agreed certification fees.

Where CCL decides to suspend or withdraw a certificate, it will write to the individual concerned advising that the certificate has been suspended or withdrawn and request its return.

Upon receiving written notification of the suspension or withdrawal of certification, the individual shall immediately:

- return to CCL appropriate certificates;
- cease carrying out work within the scope of certification that has been suspended or withdrawn;
- refrain from further promotion of the certification while it is suspended;
- refrain from use of all references to a certified status;
- resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension, in a time established by CCL, and;
- follow any other instructions included in the written notification.

Failure to resolve the issues that have resulted in the suspension, in a time established by the certification body, shall result in withdrawal of the certification or reduction of the scope of certification.

Details of the suspension or withdrawal will be submitted to the gas registration body. Individuals have the right of appeal to CCL as described in clause 13 below.

12. Complaints

An individual may make a complaint to CCL about any aspect of their assessment and certification scheme, but not about any training matters which are outside the scope of the scheme.

Complaints will be thoroughly investigated, reported, resolved and the results of any investigation will be communicated in writing to the complainant. Complaint procedures shall be in place at each assessment centre and at CCL and shall be made available to any individual, on request. The individual has the right of appeal against any decision reached by CCL (see section 13. Appeals).

13. Appeals

Individuals have the right of appeal against any of the following:

- The recommendation made by the assessor;
- CCL's decision not to issue a certificate;
- CCL's decision to withdraw or suspend a certificate;
- The decision of a CCL complaint investigation.

The initial appeal must be made within 10 working days of notification of the decision.

The total cost of appeals by an individual shall be borne by them where the appeal, at any stage, is not upheld by CCL under these scheme rules.

Full details of the appeals procedure are available on request.

14. Publicity

The scope of certification of an individual must be available to members of the public.

Information about an individual's certification may be given by CCL and shall be limited to facts concerning the scope of certification.

Certification does not allow the use of either CCL or UKAS logos unless a formal agreement for such use is given.

15. Confidentiality

CCL shall hold an individual's details in accordance with data protection legislation.

CCL and its approved assessment centres shall ensure that they and all their staff shall keep in full confidence all information of a private, confidential or secret nature. At no time shall such information be disclosed to any third party except as permitted within these scheme rules to enable the official parties to carry out their duties and obligations.

16. Fees

Assessment centres shall collect the fees for certification/administration on behalf of CCL.

The certification/administration fee applies to both successful and unsuccessful candidates.

An individual's assessment documentation shall not be processed by CCL until the payment has been made to the assessment centre.

17. Registration

Applicants should seek guidance from Gas Safe Register on the requirements for registration and for information relating to the issue of an identification card or an update of that card to cover new areas of certification.

Note: An individual holding a scheme certificate of competence may still be refused registration with Gas Safe Register.

18. Contact details

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