

NVQs for Asbestos Removal Operatives

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Q: What are NVQs?

A: National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are work based awards that are achieved through assessment and training, recognising an individual's ability to carry out a particular job role to the national standards.

Q: Which NVQ?

A: For asbestos removal operatives' there is the option of gaining an NVQ Level 2 Diploma via On-Site Assessment and Training (OSAT), which is for operatives with more than a years' experience but less than three years' experience, working in the role.
There are also Assessment Only Options - it is unlikely that an operative with fewer than three years' on-site experience will have the skills necessary for this method of assessment.
Full details are available on the [ARCA website](#)

Q: What is the benefit of having an NVQ?

A: It is a recognised competency qualification for an individual working in the asbestos removal industry. This qualification will support a candidate's application for a blue skilled worker's CSCS card.

Q: Can employers who are registered with CITB for the purposes of levy assessment receive a grant??

A: Yes. Employers who are registered with CITB for the purposes of levy assessment, and meet all CITB requirements, can apply for a grant for each candidate. Visit <http://www.citb.co.uk/levy-grant/> for current information.

Q: How can an individual enrol on an NVQ?

A: To enrol just submit an [ARCA booking form](#) which is available on all the ARCA NVQ webpages or call ARCA on 01283 505777.

Q: Is there support available for the reading and writing elements of the NVQ?

A: Yes, support is available. Any concerns should be noted on the [ARCA booking form](#) or mentioned when contacting ARCA (01283 505777), so that relevant actions can be planned.

Q: How long will the qualification last after the operative has achieved it?

A: Once an operative achieves their NVQ qualification it remains valid indefinitely. But remember, the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR 2012) requires that all operatives need, at least, an annual assessment of their abilities and this is achieved by completing Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and providing any additional training required.

ARCA ARMI Skills Cards

Q: What are ARCA ARMI Skills Cards?

A: An ARCA ARMI Skills Card is a CSCS card issued by ARCA, operating as a CSCS partner, under licence from CSCS.

An ARCA ARMI Skills Card is a certification of the cardholder's:

- identity
- qualifications
- certification of the cardholder's training

A CSCS card is not: a passport to gain entry to site, a competency card, a guarantee of a cardholder's competence, a Health and Safety card, a card for off-site employees, a certification of the cardholder's fitness to work, a record of the cardholder's work experience.

Q: Why have an ARCA ARMI Skills Card?

A: An ARCA ARMI Skills Card verifies the holders' identity and shows employers that the holder has the required training, qualifications and experience for the type of work the holder will carry out on a construction site. Most major contractors and homebuilders require workers on their sites to hold a valid card carrying the CSCS logo.

Q: What is the ARCA ARMI Skills Card for?

A: Cards carrying the CSCS logo provide proof that individuals working on construction sites have the required training and qualifications for the type of work they carry out.

Q: What CSCS cards does ARCA issue for Operatives?

A: ARCA ARMI Skills Cards available are:

- Temporary red cards
 - Asbestos Removal Operative (Trained)
 - Asbestos Removal Operative (Experienced Worker)
 - Apprentice Asbestos Removal Operative
- Blue skilled worker card
 - Asbestos Removal Operative

Q: Does an asbestos removal operative need an NVQ to gain a Blue Skilled Worker card?

A: Yes, asbestos removal operatives need to gain an NVQ to apply for a Blue Skilled Worker CSCS card.

Q: Can an operative renew an ARCA ARMI Skills Card without having an NVQ?

A: All red cards are temporary, therefore are not renewable. An operative will therefore need an NVQ to gain a blue skilled worker card.

Q: Can an operative obtain an ARCA ARMI Skills Card while working towards an NVQ?

A: Once enrolled with ARCA on an NVQ, an operative can apply for Asbestos Removal Operative (Experienced Worker), which is valid for 1 year. Therefore, the operative will have 1 year to complete an NVQ and apply for a blue skilled worker's card.

For new operatives with limited on-site experience (usually less than one year) there is an Asbestos Removal Operative (Trained) card which is valid for 3 years, therefore giving the operative time to gain more experience and undertake an OSAT NVQ.

Q: Can I renew a red Asbestos Removal Operative (Experienced Worker) card?

A: No, Asbestos Removal Operative (Experienced Worker) cards are non-renewable as the operative should have been working towards, and gained, the NVQ qualification. It should be replaced by a blue skilled worker card on achievement of an appropriate NVQ.

- Q: Does the operative have to complete the CITB Health, Safety & Environment test, after finishing the NVQ?**
- A:** No, asbestos removal operatives do not need to complete the Operative Health, Safety & Environment test if they have completed the NVQ. However, they will have to complete the CITB Health, Safety & Environment test when renewing their ARCA ARMI Skills Card.
- Q: How long does a blue skilled worker ARCA ARMI Skills Card for Asbestos Removal Operative last for?**
- A:** The Asbestos Removal Operative blue skilled workers' card is valid for 5 years. After which the operative will need to renew the card by completing a CITB Health, Safety & Environment test.
- Q: If I already hold a blue skilled workers' card, but do not hold an NVQ Level 2, can I renew the blue card?**
- A:** No, you need to gain an NVQ Level 2 to obtain a blue skilled workers' card. You can apply for an Asbestos Removal Operative (Experienced Worker) card while you are working towards gaining an NVQ.
- Q: How much does an ARCA ARMI Skills Card cost?**
- A:** An ARCA ARMI Skills Card cost is £25.00 (+ VAT).
- Q: I've lost my card. How do I get a replacement?**
- A:** Replacement cards can be ordered by contacting ARCA on 01283 566467. The cost for a replacement card is £25.00 (+ VAT).
- Q: How do I find my nearest test centre?**
- A:** You can find your nearest CITB Health, Safety & Environment test centre by using the online booking system (<http://www.citb.co.uk/cards-testing/health-safety-environment-test/>) or you can call the information and booking line on 0344 994 4488. If the person taking the test needs additional support e.g. accessibility or literacy, please call the booking line to discuss the requirements. Find out more about the at www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards/health-and-safety-test/
- Q: How do I apply for an ARCA ARMI Skills Card?**
- A:** You can check the various cards and requirements, and download an application form at www.arca.org.uk
- Q: How long will it take for my ARCA ARMI Skills Card to be sent to me?**
- A:** Once an application is received it will be checked and processed, after which a card will normally be sent within 3 working days. The applications process is covered in the ARCA ARMI Skills Card scheme information document available at www.arca.org.uk
- Q: How do I book a Health, Safety and Environment test?**
- A:** You can book online or you can call the information and booking line on 0344 994 4488. You'll need a credit or debit card to pay the fee and either your NI (national insurance) number or a CITB or CSCS registration number. Find out more about the test online at www.cscs.uk.com/applying-for-cards/health-and-safety-test/

On-Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) NVQ

- Q: What experience does an operative need before enrolling onto an On-Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) NVQ?**
- A:** This option to gain the NVQ Level 2 Diploma in Removal of Hazardous Waste (Construction) – Licensed Asbestos, is designed for candidates who have more than a years' experience, but less than three years' experience, working in an asbestos removal operative role.
- Q: What will an operative need to do to gain the OSAT NVQ?**
- A:** Candidates will need to successfully complete five assessment units (all containing practical and theoretical criteria), within a 12 month period.
- Q: How long does it take to gain an OSAT NVQ? How many on-site assessments will be needed?**
- A:** The time required to achieve this qualification, and the number of assessments needed, will depend on the skills of, and preparation by, the candidate. Generally, most candidates need two days of assessments. There is a limit of 12 months to complete the qualification.
- Q: Where and when are the induction and assessments held?**
- A:** The candidate's induction will be held at an ARCA centre at arranged times. Assessments will be on-site and arranged between the candidate/employer/assessor.
- Q: After gaining an NVQ Level 2, when will I need to undertake an Operative Refresher training course?**
- A:** Operatives will need to comply with Regulation 10 (Information, Instruction and Training) of CAR 2012.

Assessment Only Options

- Q: What is the difference between the Experienced Worker Practical Assessment (EWPA) with CITB and the Experienced Candidate Assessment Route (ECAR) with RSPH?**
- A:** Both assessment routes are for experienced workers. The assessment criteria are exactly the same and the methods of assessment are similar. The only reason we have two 'Assessment Only Options' is that they are through two different awarding bodies to gain advantage of registration fees, which is better for ARCA members.
- Q: What experience does an operative need before enrolling onto either an EWPA with CITB or an ECAR with RSPH?**
- A:** It is unlikely that a candidate with fewer than three years' on-site experience will have the skills and confidence necessary for this method of assessment.
- Q: What will an operative need to do to gain the EWPA/ECAR NVQ?**
- A:** As the candidate is experienced no training will be required therefore the candidate will undertake a thorough practical assessment, over one day, at an ARCA centre.
- Q: What if an operative does not pass the EWPA/ECAR NVQ?**
- A:** A candidate does need to be experienced, confident and well prepared, because if the candidate does not achieve the EWPA/ECAR assessment they will have to undertake an OSAT, via the same awarding body, to gain an NVQ.
- Q: After gaining an NVQ Level 2, when will I need to undertake an Operative Refresher training course?**
- A:** Operatives will need to comply with Regulation 10 (Information, Instruction and Training) of CAR 2012.