

The great rebuild

It should come as no surprise that the UK construction industry is experiencing a serious workforce and skills shortage. This is a result of a workforce laid off at the beginning of the pandemic taking up alternative employment and the loss of a significant number of European construction workers who have returned home due to Brexit. According to RICS, the shortfall in the number of skilled construction workers in the UK is currently at its highest point since 2007 writes Phil Slinger

Shortage of fenestration installers has meant that new workers have been drafted into the industry to cope with increased workloads, but where can companies gain the training needed to ensure that these complex systems are installed correctly to ensure weatherability and sustainability?

The Council for Aluminium in Building (CAB) last year partnered with GQA Qualifications award body and CSCS to develop a new route to a curtain walling installer's CSCS card. Since 2017, glass, glazing or fenestration CSCS cards are only available via GQA Qualifications.

The CAB one day introductory course forms part of a mandatory module leading to the award of the CAB curtain walling installer's CSCS card. It can also be used by CAB members as a training tool to teach the fundamentals of curtain wall systems to staff and new employees.

The course has been designed to be a generic approach to curtain walling systems and covers the principles of construction that are common across all systems manufacturers. Its aim is to give candidates a knowledge of the glazed exterior we know as curtain walling. For the candidate new to the industry the course explains what a curtain wall is, its function, what it does and how it is constructed.

Common terminology used in describing the system



and its functions are also introduced successfully. For the more experienced curtain wall installer, the review of the fundamentals of the curtain wall terminology and construction are reintroduced, along with the key issues of surveying, installation and fixing. Interface details with other parts of the building structure are also covered to give the candidate a broad understanding of good practice. Expected



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levels of quality are also introduced as are potential areas of failure. The crucial implication of getting it right first time is emphasised as remedial work required after completion can be both costly and difficult to achieve.

Once the introductory course has been successfully completed, the candidate will take an approved system house curtain wall product training course and complete the end of course assessment. To be classed as fully trained and receive a CSCS skilled worker's card candidates will need to have achieved the relevant NVQ or competency update qualification. Full guidance on the CSCS card process will be offered during the initial CAB one-day training course.

To ensure the whole process keeps up to date and continues to meet best practice, all approved training providers will take part in regular formal review meetings with CAB, GQA and systems house experts.

Applications to attend the introductory course are managed by CAB. Candidates apply by completing the enrolment form on the CAB website. CAB will contact candidates to book a course date and the training is carried out by a GQA approved training provider. The cost of the one-day course is £249 plus VAT. CAB members qualify for a discounted rate of £199 plus VAT. Training centres will offer guidance to delegates to apply for a trainee CSCS card, temporary card or renewal card. □

For information about CAB training or to obtain a copy of the CAB one-day course manual for internal training purposes, please contact julie.harley@c-a-b.org.uk For membership enquiries, please contact Jessica Dean email jessica.dean@c-a-b.org.uk telephone 01453 828851