



Around 175,000 electrotechnical workers are proud to hold an ECS card – 2021 was another busy year for ECS as it continued its work with other industry organisations to roll out services and initiatives that are vital to the electrotechnical sector.

- The JIB has worked with industry stakeholders to actively improve its service in three key areas:
- Customer experience
 - Promoting the benefits of being an ECS card holder
 - Raising standards

GOVERNANCE

All requirements for cards are developed and agreed by industry. The ECS Steering Committee – comprising ECA and SELECT as employer associations, Unite the Union on behalf of workers, IET as a professional institution, Electrical Safety First as the

industry safety charity, SSAIB on behalf of specialist sectors, and the Health and Safety Executive – review and agree the relevant sector proposals meet the necessary standard.



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Remote Invigilation service now open to individuals through MyECS

ECS has announced that its Remote Invigilation service for the ECS Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) Assessment is now available to individuals through their **MyECS** account. The Remote Invigilation service offers the choice of undertaking assessments without having to wait, without having to travel to an assessment centre, saving time and travel costs. A **video** showing step-by-step instructions to set up an online assessment has been developed and can be viewed on the ECS website.



New CPD digital system launched

A new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) digital system was launched in July, which allows all ECS card holders to record their CPD directly into their online records.

Already part of the ECS Registered Electrician Code of Professional Practice, CPD demonstrates the commitment of professionals to enhancing their professional skills throughout their careers.

CPD also plays a crucial part in ensuring that individuals in all sectors maintain the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles. It was highlighted in the publication of the 'Setting the Bar' report which addressed the issue of building a safer future and proposed an overarching system of competence that included CPD refresher training. The report stated that CSCS, and Partner Schemes such as ECS, would play an important part in the framework in ensuring individuals had been trained and assessed to the relevant industry standard and that the cardholders kept up to date with the relevant requirements for their role.



Jay Parmar, CEO of the JIB, said: "This is a huge step forwards for an industry which has been working to raise standards across the built environment since the tragedy of Grenfell Tower in June 2017. The benefits of CPD are numerous for both the employee and the employer as it allows individuals to continually develop their skills, regardless of age or occupation."

The ECS CPD digital system offers all card holders a free online portfolio through the **MyECS** section of the **ECS website** which allows evidence of skills and knowledge which they have achieved to be easily saved.

ECS card holders can now log in to their **MyECS Portal** to view their CPD record and start to log their activities, upload or have verified any new technical certificates and update their card as necessary.

PROMOTING THE BENEFITS OF BEING AN ECS CARD HOLDER

New CSCS Smart Check app to revolutionise card verification procedures

A new app, developed by the 38 card schemes displaying the CSCS logo is set to radically improve the construction industry's card checking procedures and site safety.

The CSCS Smart Check app represents a major step forward as, for the first time, all 2.1 million cards displaying the CSCS logo can be electronically verified using a single app.

The rollout of the app begins in April 2022, providing clients, main contractors and employers with a quick, easy and secure way of ensuring everyone on site has the right qualifications and training for the job they do. The app will be free to use and available for Apple iOS and Android devices.

Click [here](#) to find out more about the CSCS Smart Check app.

Qualification & apprenticeship routes

Work with industry and employer groups led to updates or inclusions of 15 ECS card types, recognising 25 professional memberships and review of over 50 qualification and apprenticeship routes including:

- FESS Operative and Technicians including Experienced Worker Assessments
- Network Infrastructure Installers and Assistants
- Launch of Digital Support Technicians and Operatives, Network Engineer, Network Security and Management roles
- Updates to Electrical Product Service Engineer
- Industry Placement cards following collaboration with CSCS, PMES-JIB, BESA, Build UK, DFE and IFATE

Industry bodies unite to upskill workforce and build a low carbon future

An industry-wide initiative involving the ECS, both through the JIB and Scottish JIB for the Electrotechnical Industry, Joint Industry Board for Plumbing, Mechanical and Engineering Services (JIB-PMES), Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) and the Scottish Northern Ireland Joint Industry Board (SNIJIB) is underway in order to upskill the UK's existing workforce and help achieve the Government's target of net zero carbon by 2050 (and respective devolved nations of 2050 for Wales and Northern Ireland and 2045 in Scotland).

Over the next few years there is an expected surge in demand for low carbon transport, energy efficiency, storage and for more sustainable methods of heating. For example, 600,000 heat pumps will be required every year by 2028 (Government's Green Plan, announced November 2020). The five CSCS Partner Schemes above, representing more than 300,000 operatives across the UK heating and ventilation, mechanical and electrotechnical sectors, are working together to recognise and endorse the qualifications, skills, and experience of their workforce in this crucial area.



RAISING STANDARDS

Entering a Digital Age

ECS worked with industry and Government to update a number of apprenticeship and occupation requirements, and expanded ECS to recognise a greater amount of training and qualifications. This included the development of Digital Support occupations for the first time including: Digital Support Technician and Operative, Network Security Technician, Digital Network Engineer, Digital Support Manager.

To develop these routes to personnel certification, ECS worked with the Department for Education, Institute for Apprenticeships, British Computer Society – Chartered Institute for IT, awarding



organisations and providers, such as Pearson, CompTIA and CNET, a number of large employers and industry stakeholders.

These occupations cover those using digital technologies across their organisations (likely as part of IT and/or telecoms infrastructure) in areas such as digital communications, network systems, data centre operations and management, network and cyber security, programming, software, support and user skills.

"Additional awareness of topics such as security by design and system hardening are widening the skills required of professionals and by having agreed standards created by industry peers this can help create a foundation for employee development programmes. The JIB and ECS understands the importance of life-long learning and we are excited to work with them to create and support upskilling programmes that are engaging and relevant for their Digital Support Operatives and Technicians."

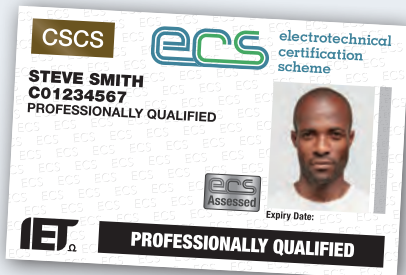
GRAHAM HUNTER,
Vice-President for Skills Certification
at CompTIA, EMEA,
Asia Pacific and Canada

RAISING STANDARDS

Greater recognition for professionals and professional memberships

The ECS has announced recognition for a greater number of professional organisations, offering greater flexibility to individuals applying for ECS cards. Professionally Qualified Persons (PQP) cards are for those working in specialised electrotechnical disciplines, and the card recognises the holder's status through their registration with the professional institute. Professional bodies and memberships are well-recognised in the industry for the support and development of their members.

The list of recognised organisations has recently been expanded to more than 20 professional bodies, including the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), Institute of Fire Safety Management and the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE).



ECS Check reaches major milestone

ECS Check, the digital system launched in early 2020, has now seen more than 1,000 organisations registered to use it. The landmark figure represents a 'major milestone' according to the Electrotechnical Certification Scheme (ECS).

Available both through an online portal on a browser and as an app for auditing personnel on the gate or for spot checks, ECS Check provides a free-to-access digital solution that enables the industry to verify all electrotechnical personnel on-site throughout the supply chain.

A number of clients and main contractors such as Actemium, Atkins, Balfour Beatty, Birmingham Airport, Mace, MOD, Morgan Sindall, National Grid, Northern Ireland Housing Executive, a number of councils and local health trusts have all registered for ECS Check since its launch.

35,000 ECS card holders with Registered Electrician status



More than **5,000** ECS assessments taken by Remote Invigilation



175,000 ECS cards registered in UK



ECS CARD HOLDER SURVEY

Two-thirds of respondents said they required their ECS card for project access



On average **1,400** ECS applications received on a weekly basis with majority being turned around within **2 weeks**



VIEW FROM THE INDUSTRY

“ECS Check gives us necessary visibility on our supply chain to ensure the high standards for competence and qualifications to which we hold our employees are also true for our subcontractors.”

Balfour Beatty Kilpatrick