



Construction
Skills Certification
Scheme

Annual Review 2024



Raising standards and safety in construction



Welcome to the 2024 CSCS Group Annual Review



It is my pleasure to present this Annual Review - my first as Chair since joining the CSCS Group.

Dame Janet Paraskeva
Chair, CSCS Group



[CSCS Limited Board](#)

[CSCS Cards Limited Board](#)



I will begin by expressing my gratitude to my predecessor, Carolyn Uphill, and former Board member David Barnes. Their tireless efforts and commitment have been instrumental in helping achieve a fully qualified workforce and laying the strong foundations on which the CSCS Group can continue to grow as we enter the scheme's 30th year serving the industry.

I am also delighted to welcome Chris Carr to the Board. As Managing Director of a family-run housing development and construction firm and the current President of the Federation of Master Builders, Chris brings a wealth of experience and expertise that will greatly benefit the CSCS Board.

One of my initial responsibilities as Chair was overseeing the formation of the CSCS Group, a strategic step designed to enhance governance, operational efficiency, and transparency. The new structure divides the organisation into two key entities and is explained in more detail further on in the review.

- **CSCS Limited**, which owns the CSCS logo and licencing process
- **CSCS Cards Limited**, which operates the CSCS card scheme.

This year also saw the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) publish their updated recommendation to card schemes. This was welcomed by the CSCS Board as it ensures that all card schemes displaying the CSCS logo are well placed to deliver the expectations of the

Building Safety Act and continue to play a central role in the verification of workers training and qualifications.

Garry Mortimer and his team at CSCS Cards Ltd also announced significant adjustments to the Trainee and Labourer cards. These new carding rules ensure the scheme is aligned with the "routes to competency" expectations of the Building Safety Act and that new entrants start their careers on a recognised training pathway that leads to competence.

Efforts to phase out Industry Accreditation (IA) cards have progressed significantly, with fewer than 13,700 individuals holding only an IA-issued CSCS card- just 1.4% of the CSCS-carded workforce.

The number one priority for the CSCS Board next year will be to support the industry to meet their legal obligations under the Building Safety Act.

The expectation is that the threshold for obtaining a card is likely to change and will no longer be about just having a qualification and a health and safety test but, instead, a culture of the ongoing development of skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours.

The CSCS Board must ensure the relevant card schemes are engaged in this process and that cards carrying the CSCS logo are only issued when the agreed thresholds, as set by the industry, have been evidenced.

The CSCS card application service will also be going through a major transformation in 2025, with customers benefiting from the launch of the updated **my CSCS** app, providing a simpler way to apply for, renew, and use their CSCS cards.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to both the CSCS Limited and CSCS Cards Limited Boards, as well as the Executive Team, for their dedication and support during this pivotal year. Your commitment ensures that CSCS Group remains a leader in fostering a qualified and safe workforce for construction and the Built Environment.

Next year will mark the scheme's 30th anniversary and 10 years since the initial Construction Leadership Council's recommendations were made via the One Industry Logo action. I look forward to working with the industry to further strengthen the Group and play our part in delivering a fully trained and qualified workforce.

Thank you.

Dame Janet Paraskeva
Chair, CSCS Group



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Highlights and Accomplishments

New Group Structure

On May 1st 2024, the new CSCS Group company structure came into effect. The CSCS Group is made up of two separate businesses.

CSCS Limited: is the owner of the CSCS logo and manages the logo licencing process. Responsible for ensuring all 38 card schemes displaying the CSCS logo comply with the Construction Leadership Council's recommendation on industry card schemes and any other conditions of licence. The integrity of the licencing process is upheld through a bi-annual auditing process and if required, improvement action plans are introduced.

CSCS Limited is responsible for all new licencing applications and owns the intellectual property rights to all CSCS's software solutions, including the online application service CSCS Online, the my CSCS app and the card reading software CSCS Smart Check.

CSCS Cards Limited: is the owner and operator of the CSCS card scheme, this includes responsibility for the entire card application service. CSCS cards provide proof that individuals working in construction hold the appropriate training and qualifications for the job they do on site.

As a holder of a licence to use the CSCS logo, CSCS Cards joins the 37 other members of the CSCS Alliance.

Updated Construction Leadership Council recommendation

Following the introduction of the Building Safety Act, the Construction Leadership Council (CLC) updated its recommendation to industry and reiterated that construction should specify and promote card schemes carrying the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) logo with no equivalents accepted.

The CLC recommendations have been in play for 10 years and have played a significant role in driving up standards by ensuring hundreds of thousands of previously unqualified workers achieve recognised qualifications.

The revised recommendation, published in April, prepares the card schemes to play a pivotal role in helping the industry to deliver on its legal duties under the Building Safety Act. Central to the new building safety regime is a focus on workforce competency, it's no longer about only having qualifications and a health and safety test, but a culture of the ongoing development of skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours.

Where a construction worker holds the right card for their occupation, it will provide assurances that they have achieved the recognised qualification, and any additional specified training required for that occupation, which demonstrates the Skills and Knowledge elements of competence.

The recommendations can be viewed in full via the [CLC website](#).



CSCS Smart Check

With over 2.5 million card checks a month, CSCS Smart Check continues its trajectory to becoming the industry's only platform to verify CSCS-logged cards, particularly following the switch-off of its predecessor Go Smart in March.

The platform's technology can be built into existing site systems while it is also available as a mobile app and the [CSCSSmartCheck.co.uk](#) website, providing employers with a quick, easy and secure way of ensuring everyone has the right card, training and qualifications for their role.

The platform has improved the construction industry's card checking procedures and site safety, while helping to tackle card fraud. To find out more about integrating the technology into your site systems, visit [CSCS.uk.com/SmartCheck](#).



CSCS Smart Check card scans in 2024

API	22,554,403
App and Website	822,939





Highlights and Accomplishments

Labourer and Trainee card changes

Changes to the Labourer and Trainee cards will come into effect from February 2025 and are designed to better align both cards with the Building Safety Act, by ensuring new entrants not only start their career on the right CSCS card but on a recognised training pathway that leads to competence.

The Labourer card – often used as a quick, easy way to access site - will be reduced to two years on first application and will only be open to renewal for those who continue in Labouring occupations.

The adjustment is also designed to address the current oversupply of Labourer cards and ensure only those carrying out genuine labouring duties carry the card.

Similarly, the Trainee card is to be opened to those holding certain occupational related non-competence qualifications.

Approximately 120,000 candidates annually undertake level 2 (or above) occupational related non-competence qualifications for construction trades however none meet the industry’s N/SVQ Level 2 occupational competence qualification threshold or provide site experience to be eligible for a CSCS skilled worker card.

The widening of the card’s scope is designed to ensure individuals can apply for a two-year Trainee card rather than a Labourer card, with the initial card renewable for a further three years if the card holder provides evidence they are registered onto an N/SVQ or an agreed alternative.

Trainee, Apprentice and Industry Placement cards are geared towards new entrants to the industry and show that the holder is on a recognised training pathway.

Industry Accreditation

All Industry Accreditation (IA) CSCS cards issued from 1st January 2020 onwards will expire by 31st December 2024 and cannot be replaced using IA.

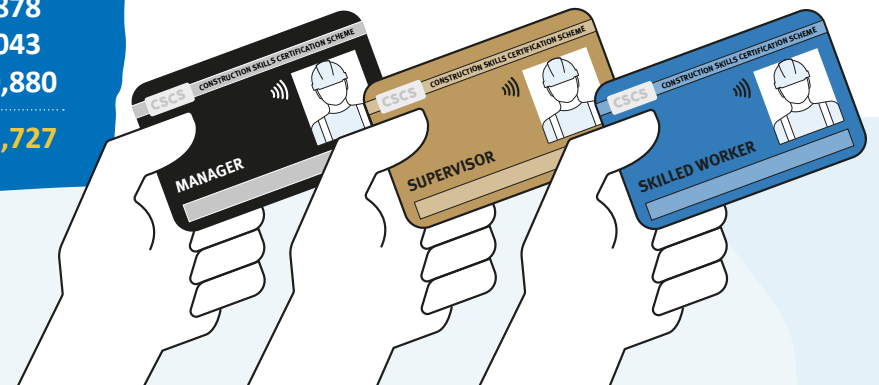
As IA cards were issued on the strength of an employer recommendation, they do not meet Construction Leadership Council’s recommendation, which state that “the minimum standard for a skilled occupation must be a relevant qualification or training and testing programme that is aligned to N/SVQ, IfATE Level 2 or SCQF Level 5”.

CSCS Cards Limited is a member of the cross-industry taskforce that designed the package of support and guidance available, which includes CITB grant funding and the provision of flexible assessment routes for those affected.

That CITB grant funding has been extended to March 2026 while for CSCS, the priority is to provide support for those whose cards have expired without having a plan in place to renew while continuing to support those on temporary experienced worker cards while completing their qualification assessment.

CSCS cards issued in 2024

Manager	10,364
Supervisor	10,266
Experienced Worker	2,143
Academically/Professionally qualified	27,153
Skilled	79,878
In Training	25,043
Labourer	120,880
Total cards issued	275,727



Priorities for 2025



Data Insights

Each CSCS Alliance member holds valuable data on their carded workforce. This includes, but isn't limited to, details on occupations, qualifications, training achievements, skill levels, location and age.

The CSCS Alliance have begun the process of sharing their data and by combining versions of the data sets, the CSCS Alliance can then start to develop a granular understanding of the entire carded workforce across the UK and how that changes year on year.

Preliminary discussions with the Construction Leadership Council and the newly formed Skills England highlighted their interest in the data and its potential to influence the future direction of skills and training in the UK.

The priority is to continue with the data collection exercise until all 38 CSCS Alliance members (2.3million cards) are contained within the model. From this point onwards the CSCS Alliance has the potential to become the industry's one true data source on two key elements of competence as defined by the industry, Skills and Knowledge.



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Building Safety Act and competence

Priorities for the card scheme in its 30th year, will centre around the essential alignment with the requirements coming from the Building Safety Act.

The competence of the workforce is at the heart of the Act, which defines competence as having the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours (SKEB) and places a legal duty on individuals carrying out construction work to be competent for their roles. Clients and contractors are responsible for ensuring that individuals carrying out work on their behalf are competent.

All recognised construction occupations will be expected to have a 'Route to Competence' to obtain and renew a card. Once agreed by the Standard Setting Body and Sector Representative Organisations for each occupation, cards carrying the CSCS logo will only be issued when the agreed qualifications, training, and health and safety element have been evidenced.

Where a construction worker holds the right card for their occupation, it provides assurance that they have achieved the recognised qualification, and any additional specified training required for that occupation, which demonstrates the Skills and Knowledge elements of competence.

Customer service

Customer journey and user experience remain key to CSCS, with both set to be improved further when the my CSCS app is updated in 2025. With a fully refreshed user interface, the app provides a quick, simple and secure way to apply or renew directly via CSCS - avoiding the higher fees often charged by third parties. The app also stores your digital card for site access and keeps a record of your training and qualification achievements.

New functionality will also be introduced into our contact centre, powered by Zendesk, in early 2025 designed to improve the process of making customer enquiries. The new system is in addition to our webchat facility, which connects customers instantly to a contact centre representative.



CEO closing statement



“With the implementation of our new structure, we are better placed to uphold our role as a transparent and effective licensor.”

Sean Kearns
Group Chief Executive

As we conclude this year’s Annual Review, it is my great pleasure to welcome our new Chair, Dame Janet Paraskeva, and Board member, Chris Carr.

Their expertise and leadership will undoubtedly strengthen the CSCS Group as we move forward. At the same time, we bid a heartfelt farewell to Carolyn Uphill and David Barnes, whose years of dedication and exemplary service have left an enduring legacy. Carolyn and David, we thank you and wish you every success in your future endeavours.

This year has been a pivotal one for the CSCS Group. With the implementation of our new structure, we are better positioned to uphold our role as a transparent and effective licensor. This ensures that all 38 card schemes bearing the CSCS logo continue to meet the Construction Leadership Council’s rigorous recommendations, safeguarding standards across the industry.

2025 marks a major milestone both for ourselves as a scheme entering its 30th year of working both alongside and for the industry, as well as our friends at the Construction Leadership Council, whose recommendations turn 10 years old.

Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond, I am particularly excited about the transformative potential of our Data Insights project and the ongoing rollout of CSCS Smart Check. These initiatives exemplify our commitment to innovation and excellence across all construction sites.

Big Data will enable us to better understand industry trends and provide evidence of the carded workforce to shape skills and training strategies to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving sector.

CSCS Smart Check also continues to improve the process for employers to verify training and qualifications across the 2.3 million CSCS-logoed cards - a game-changer in improving card checking practices.

This year also marks a significant milestone with the conclusion of the Industry Accreditation process. As we advance towards a fully qualified workforce, the majority of affected individuals are now either on cards supported by recognised qualifications or on pathways that will lead them to achieve these standards.

This has been a particularly difficult change for the industry, but an important step towards raising standards. On behalf of the CSCS Board, I would like to thank all those who have shown support over the last few years as we transition away from Industry Accreditation.

The updates to Labourer and Trainee cards further highlight our unwavering commitment to raising industry standards. These changes emphasise the importance of ensuring individuals hold the correct card for their specific role, particularly in light of the Building Safety Act. This legislation is reshaping industry practices, and CSCS-logoed cards provide assurance that workers have met the qualifications and training, which demonstrates the Skills and Knowledge elements of competence.

In closing, I want to express my deepest gratitude to our stakeholders, the CSCS Boards, and our exceptional Executive Team. Your dedication and collaboration are instrumental in building a safer, more qualified, and professional construction industry.

Together, we are driving meaningful progress and setting the foundation for an even stronger future.

As we look ahead, I am confident that the CSCS Alliance schemes will continue to play a central role in advancing industry standards and supporting the industry in delivering the Building Safety Act.

Wishing you all success and prosperity in the year to come.

Thank you.

Sean Kearns
Group Chief Executive



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Construction Skills Certification Scheme



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