Contents

Introduction to Connected Competence

What is Connected Competence?

Connected Competence standardises base competence and training requirements for the offshore and site workforce in the UK. It streamlines training, assures the base level of competence and assists with the efficient transfer of employees between companies.

How does it work?

For the first time, Connected Competence companies will work together to standardise qualifications, base pre-mobilisation training, industry specific knowledge tests and ongoing technical tests.

If an employee moves to another Connected Competence company, the companies will share information relating to their employees' testing history within the Connected Competence cycle.

Which organisations have adopted Connected Competence?

Aker Solutions, Amec Foster Wheeler, Bilfinger Salamis UK, Petrofac, Stork and Wood Group have adopted the Connected Competence framework, in partnership with the Engineering and Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB).

Does Connected Competence cover all trades?

Yes, in the future, the aim is that all trades will be part of the Connected Competence process. However they will be included on a phased basis.

The trades involved in phase 1 are:
- Electrical Installation
- Electrical Maintenance
- Instrument and Control Maintenance
- Mechanical Maintenance
- Pipefitter
- Plater
- Rigger (offshore only)
- Site Focal Point/Appointed Person (offshore only)

Phase 1 will take effect from 1st June 2017. The individual employing companies will roll out the implementation plan across their own organisation.

More trades will be added as Connected Competence continues through its phased implementation.

What are the benefits to Connected Competence?

The Connected Competence companies have agreed a base level of competence for each trade and will work together to share information relating to their employees' training history. This will mean:

For our industry
- Reduced time chasing certificates
- Reduced duplication of training courses

- Simplified process
- A standardised competent workforce
- Reduced time to mobilise

 For our clients
- Greater visibility of workforce competence
- Improved transferability of personnel competency status
- Simplified process and greater alignment

 For our employees
As an existing employee, this will mean:
- A standardised way to demonstrate technical competence
- Reduction in duplicate training and assessment
- Ownership of your certificates with access to your competence data
- Reduced time away from home during field breaks whilst undergoing testing at the ECITB's network of UK test centres

If you choose to move to another Connected Competence company, additional benefits include:
- Efficient transfer of your competence data between organisations
- Continuation of your competence and development cycle instead of starting again

Connected Competence for existing employees

Where do I fit into the Connected Competence process?
An existing employee in a phase 1 trade will enter the Connected Competence ongoing technical test cycle by being booked on a cycle one technical test.
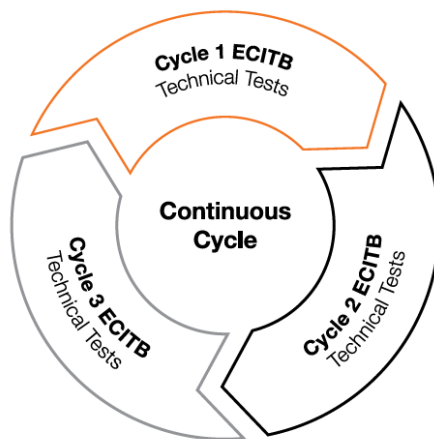
What is a technical test?
The technical tests are a series of onshore competence assessments designed to demonstrate that employees have the base minimum required for that specific trade. The first part of the technical test is a computer-based, 10 multiple-choice knowledge test questions, which require a score of 80% to pass. If required, a staff member from the test centre will be available to read the question and answer options to an individual sitting the test.

Once an employee has passed this stage, they will proceed to the practical assessment.

How many technical tests do I need to complete and how often?

Each trade has different tests that are required to be completed each year, over a three-year cycle period. On average, there are two or three tests per cycle and each test is expected to take half a day to complete. On completion of the third cycle of tests, the employee will go back to the cycle one tests.

Where do I complete a technical test?

The technical tests are completed at onshore ECITB approved test centres. The ECITB has a network of UK test centres which means employees will be able to complete technical tests at local test centres, decreasing time away from home during field breaks.

Please speak to your employer's Connected Competence focal point for further information on the test centres.

How long is a technical test valid for?

Each technical test is valid for 36 months and is refreshed every three years.

What are the differentiating factors of the cycle 1, 2 & 3 technical tests, if any?

The yearly cycles were agreed between the Technical Authorities of the Connected Competence companies as the base minimum required for the specified trades. There is no increase in difficulty as the years' progress.

Connected Competence for new employees

What happens if I transfer to another Connected Competence company?

If an employee has completed any technical tests, these will move with that individual and they will continue the three-year cycle instead of starting again.

If an employee hasn't completed any technical tests they will be required to complete a knowledge test.

What is a knowledge test?

The ECITB knowledge test consists of 35 questions relevant to a specific trade, which has been designed by the Technical Authorities of the Connected Competence companies. An individual completing the test must score 80% or higher to pass. If an individual scores a near fail (70-79%), they will get an automatic opportunity to re-sit the test to score the 80% pass mark.

The knowledge test is a computer-based, multiple-choice assessment. If required, a staff member from the test centre will be available to read the question and answer options to an individual sitting the test.

Where do I complete a knowledge test?

The knowledge tests are completed at onshore ECITB approved test centres. The ECITB has a network of UK test centres which means employees will be able to complete technical tests at local test centres, decreasing time away from home during field breaks.

How long is a knowledge test valid for?

The knowledge test is valid for 12 months.

Does Connected Competence cover the complete competence assurance process?

Connected Competence is designed to ensure a base minimum standard for assuring the competence for specific trades. It will be the decision of individual companies about whether they choose to include on-the-job assessments in addition to the onshore tests. Please speak to your employer's Connected Competence focal point for further information.

How does Connected Competence align with Step Change in Safety's (SCIS) 'Competence Management – Guidance on Safety Critical Jobs' document?

The Connected Competence companies consulted and reviewed all relevant legislation and industry procedures, including SCIS, when creating the Connected Competence documentation.

How will I know when I need to complete a Technical Test?

Employees will have visibility of the test validity periods through their individual account to an online database. Employing companies will also send employees reminders to ensure they complete the required test when it is due.

What happens if I keep changing organisations before I reach the 12 months to complete the Technical Tests?

The Connected Competence companies will ensure that all trades are included in the technical test cycle, regardless of whether the individuals in these trades have regular short term employment. Therefore, if an employee has successfully passed two knowledge tests within 24 months, the employing company will book the employee straight onto the technical test cycle.

Systems

If I have copies of my certificates, how does my employer know I've passed?

Employees' individual data will be stored in a database which will record successful passes of training and competence assessments. Employees will be able to access their personal data through their own individual accounts to the database.

What else is stored in the database?

Qualifications will not be stored and employees will be required to show these to new employers.

Any company-specific or site-specific training and competence assurance evaluations will not be stored in the database.

Fails will not be recorded in the database and will only be visible to the company that paid for the failed test.

Who has access to my data?

Each Connected Competence company will have access to the passed training and competence assessments which are stored in the database.

Personal data and privacy are managed in accordance with current legislation and are of paramount importance to all stakeholders in Connected Competence. Everyone has a responsibility to manage and protect personal data and any possible failure to comply with relevant policies, procedures and legislation will be highlighted to relevant employers for their specific consideration and action.

Can I request to see the data related to me in the database?

Yes, employees will have the same rights to their data as they currently do. For more information please contact your employer's Connected Competence focal point.

Further information

Who do I contact for further information?

Please speak to your employer's Connected Competence focal point for further information.