

What is ECS?

ECS (Electrotechnical Certification Scheme) is the sole ID and competence card scheme for electrotechnical operatives in the UK. Recognised and endorsed by the industry, holding an ECS card proves your qualification status, main electrical occupation, identity, your health and safety awareness, as well as any additional disciplines in which you are skilled to work.



Electrical Safety First
The UK's electrical safety experts



Governance

Phil Wilbraham, formerly of Heathrow Airport Limited, was announced as the new Chair of the ECS Steering Committee.

The ECS Steering Committee sets the strategic direction and recognises the training, qualification and occupational competence standards for individual

certification across a range of disciplines. Representatives span the entire electrotechnical sector, including contractors and electricians, with representatives from Unite, ECA, SELECT, IET, Electrical Safety First and the HSE. This combined strength is a testament to the importance which is placed on the ECS and relevance of the decisions made by the committee to support the overarching objectives.

Industry collaboration

Following extensive work by the **JIB Cabling and Jointing Committee**, ECA and Unite the Union, a new industrial relations agreement for the Cabling Sector was agreed in December 2019. This allowed further work on the introduction of a new suite of ECS cards and grading for the sector, as well as new qualifications and competency assessment for Cable Jointing throughout 2020.

An Occupational Qualification Structure has also been developed by the **Network Infrastructure Industry** working group formed of trade associations and employer representatives. The structure aligns with the future of the Network Infrastructure Industry and addresses the fragmented skills within the current workforce.

The **Fire, Emergency and Security Systems** (FESS) industry introduced a new Occupational Qualification Structure leading to the ECS card recognition, aimed at promoting high standards and skills. The new pathway recognises the differences in training, experience and qualifications for those already in the industry, which critically identifies a minimum standard for those who install and maintain fire, emergency and security systems.

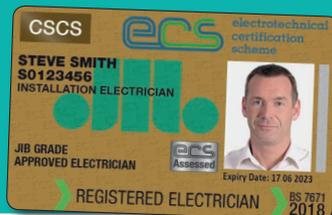
Armed Forces

Defence Awarding Organisation electrical military qualifications for the Corps of Royal Engineers form a route to an Installation Electrician occupation and ECS Registered Electrician status. The quality of training provided by the **Royal School of Military Engineering (RSME)** is extremely high, with personnel typically spending a minimum of five and a half years in the Corps, inclusive of training to become artisan tradespeople in their relevant engineering specialism. The JIB, NET, ECA and Unite the Union worked with the Royal Engineers at Chatham to map equivalence to the established National Occupational Standards and industry criteria.



Competence

Since the tragedy of Grenfell Tower three years ago, work has been ongoing to raise standards across building safety. The JIB has been on Working Group 2: Installers of the Competence Steering Groups to assist in this process of shaping policy and ultimately working to improve safety in all stages of a building's lifecycle. Setting the Bar, released on 5th October 2020, is the second and final report of the Competence Steering Group. ECS, as a Partner Scheme of CSCS, is well placed as part of these recommendations out of Setting the Bar, recognising underpinning level 3 qualifications for all occupations, through reassessment and CPD connected to registration (including Registered Electrician status) and is continuing its work to improve fire safety knowledge in buildings.



175,000 ECS cards
registered in the UK



350
companies
are now
signed up for
ECS Check



30,000 ECS card
holders with Registered
Electrician status



Protection of title for the Profession of Electrician

At present, the lack of regulation means anyone can claim to be an electrician and carry out electrical work in Scotland. These unqualified and under-qualified individuals put people at risk of injury and death through faulty electrical installation and maintenance work.

That's why the SJIB, **SELECT**, Unite the Union, with the support of the JIB and the ECA have been seeking the introduction of 'protection of title' for the profession of electrician.

Regulation milestones

- **February 2021** – Scottish Government Consultation: **SELECT**, SJIB, Unite the Union, ECA & JIB submit responses to the Scottish Government's consultation on regulation.
- **November 2020** – Members' Bill Consultation: A consultation launched by Conservative MSP Jamie Halcro Johnston closed last November with more than 140 submissions – more than 90% of which were positive.
- **November 2019** – Holyrood exhibition: **SELECT** and the SJIB spent three days at Scottish Parliament, engaging with MSPs about the urgent need for protection of title.
- **February 2019** – call for evidence: The Scottish Government commissioned Pye Tait to gather evidence on the extent of substandard electrical installations in Scotland and the risks posed to the general public.
- **October 2018** – parliamentary debate: A Scottish Parliament debate was held on the issue, led by Jamie Halcro Johnston.



New technology

ECS

ECS Check, a new free-to-use digital system from ECS, allows clients, contractors and others to verify the ECS card status of electrotechnical workers throughout the supply chain on a project-by-project basis - all in real-time. ECS Check is available through an online portal and smartphone app for verification of personnel. It complements the ECS virtual card, read through a QR code on the ECS Check app, as part of work to boost competence levels in the built environment.

CPD

Environmental skills and qualifications are part of continuing professional development (CPD) for many electrotechnical operatives and can be recognised within registration and on the reverse of an ECS card. The JIB has been encouraging member companies throughout 2020 to take advantage of the JIB's Skills Development Fund, which provides financial assistance for courses for those undertaking further education and training in the electrical industry.

Remote invigilation

Remote invigilation systems have also recently launched for companies registered on the ECS Employer Portal. Market-leading artificial intelligence monitoring software is now embedded in the systems which means companies and individuals can take advantage of the ability to undertake assessments remotely for health, safety and environmental awareness, as well as the newly launched FESS and Network Infrastructure assessments. Find out more by registering for ECS online services through

www.ecscard.org.uk/ECS-Employer-Portal



Green technology qualifications accepted by the JIB Skills Development Fund as eligible courses:

- Solar Photovoltaic Installation and Maintenance
- Electric Vehicle Charging Point Installation (City & Guilds 2919-01)
- ONC/HNC/Degree courses in sustainable engineering



Visit www.ecscard.org.uk for further information about:

- Training providers
- Routes to Gold Card status
- **Remote invigilation** for HSE assessments



Almost 3,000 companies on the ECS Employer Portal



More than 99% of all ECS card applications are completed online

