

## Online Exams & CMS Plans

NSAR have seen an increase of Providers not undertaking the Online exam process in line with RTAS V2.0.

- Online Exams **MUST** be completed at least 21 days before expiry to make sure that Competences are maintained as stated in RTAS 4.3.8.9
- Operational individuals must successfully complete the nine (9) to twelve (12) months interim assessment **PRIOR** to taking the On-Line Exams in line with RTAS 4.3.8.3.

Your Competence Management System and plans must include checking and completion of these exams alongside the completion of 6x Workplace Assessments within 12 months for each assessor, Observations, practical skill maintenance for non-operational trainer/assessors, upskill mentoring and delivery of varied courses to maintain capability without skills fade and mentor suitability. Best practice would include regular reviews during management meetings.

## Sentinel & HASAW Requirements

Please be reminded, in line with the Sentinel Scheme Rules that require adherence to HASAW (1974), it is the responsibility of the sponsor, primary or sub sponsor, to pay for any Training/Assessments that the Primary or Sub sponsor requires them to have. Under no circumstances should the learner pay for their own Training/Assessment (refer to Sections 2 & 9 of HASAW 1974 for more information).

## Skills Backbone Events Calendar

All Training and Assessment events must be added to the events calendar regardless of whether the event is for Network Rail as a framework supplier. If the course is in Skills Backbone, all delivery events must be added. Please ensure any delivery that your Trainers/Assessors are detailed with the Online Calendar and to ensure all Assessments entries detail location information to include:

1. Meeting Point
2. Meeting Time
3. ELR, access point, mileage & WON reference numbers [where applicable] etc.

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### Personal Track Safety Verification Tests

As advised in the Skills Backbone communication sent 09/06/2021, It has come to NSAR's attention that some Assured Providers are delivering Verification tests A **and** B within the same class rather than Verification tests A **or** B to all learners within the same event.

Network Rail have confirmed that **all** learners should receive verification test A or verification test B. The trainer must decide which test they will be delivering to the course and all learners within that event must have the same test.

Network Rail will be amending the lesson plan in due course to make this explicit.

From the date of the alert, 09/06/2021, any instances of courses delivered using both tests will be recorded as a non-conformance and may be referred to formal review for consideration of whether the presence of two tests indicates cheating of verification testing arrangements.

### Safe System Of Work

NSAR continues to observe sub-standard management, completion and use of Safe Work Packs within training events. A significant proportion of Assured Providers and Assured Positions attention and adherence to operational requirements within Safe Work Packs is of a standard that suggests that they are considered a training and assessment aid rather than a safety critical document required to deliver compliant training and assessment.

All Providers and Trainers are reminded that training and assessment events that include the use of the rail managed infrastructure are in Rule Book terms 'working' and fall under Rule Book and safety standard requirements to maintain the safety of all learners and trainer/assessors alike.

Safe Work Packs required for the delivery of training are operational documents that **must** meet all requirements of the Rule Book and NR/L2/OHS/019 and must be completed, used and signed in accordance with all RTAS, Rule Book and NR/L2/OHS/019 requirements.

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### Continuous Professional Development

As we approach the end of the CPD period, please ensure all entries are submitted for review as soon as possible to ensure your entries are not rejected through changes needed. Deadline day is **30<sup>th</sup> June 2021**.

2020-2021 has seen a successful CPD period and shown an increase of quality for many individuals and providers.

Changes to CPD categories will take place in the next CPD period [2021-2022]. This will be briefed by an update to CPD guidelines and supported by a CPD webinar taking place on 20th & 23rd July 2021. We encourage all Assured Trainers/Assessors and Training managers to attend this to improve quality in CPD plans, submissions and support your team's understanding and use of the new categories.

### NSAR Provider Forum/ Webinar Workshops

Thank you to those that joined the webinar for The Holistic Learner and all the positive feedback received.

Webinar workshops will continue remotely for the time being. For those that may have missed any workshops you can find these available on our social media platforms and on request via Freshdesk. In 2021, we plan to hold the following webinars:

- Continuous Professional Development – Changes & Support
- Using Skills Backbone & Freshdesk
- Biased and unbiased delivery
- Internal Verification

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### NEW Signature & Declaration form [Appendix 2]

Version 8.0 of the Signature & Declaration [referred to as 'Appendix 2'] has been published with a compliance date of Monday 28th June 2021. Any requests submitted that do not use this updated form or are incomplete will not be processed. Any submissions made before Monday 28th June 2021 using V7.0 will be processed.

We ask that you adopt the updated form as soon as possible, it can be used in advance of the compliance date. The new form will be available to download from our website [QA Resources – National Skills Academy for Rail \(nsar.co.uk\)](https://nsar.co.uk) before the compliance date.

### Skills Backbone information

NSAR continues to note inadequate information provided on Skills Backbone. Providers are required to document updated information to Skills Backbone when changes take place. Please ensure details are current and correct including:

- Contact details of staff including email addresses.
- Training Centres – Including a note of a Main office.
- Aligned Trainers & Assessors in line with Sentinel.
- Approved practical sites – if a practical site does not appear on your drop down in the events calendar you are **not** registered to use it, do not assume this is an error, please ask – Please contact Freshdesk to request removal of any unwanted sites.

### Communication & Getting in touch

Contact us by using Freshdesk, <https://nsar.freshdesk.com>. Freshdesk is a Helpdesk support tool and tickets raised have an SLA of 5 days, however, if your request is urgent, you can set its priority as urgent. Please make sure that your communication is always kept to a professional standard and your enquiry is best suited to NSAR and not another channel.

We have provided communications channel list for guidance alongside this briefing note. Please be reminded once a ticket is closed, any communication should be made through a new Freshdesk ticket as this communication may not be seen.