



**Rail industry
body NSAR
proves its provider
assurance process is
'best in class' through
BSI assessment against
ISO 19011**



Established in 2010, The National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) helps the UK rail sector to develop a skilled, productive workforce. It coordinates industry efforts to attract talent and works with training and assessment providers to facilitate qualifications and apprenticeship programmes that build competency across the sector. It also supports trainers and assessors, and ensures high quality training and assessment provision.

Among its key tasks, NSAR works on behalf of Network Rail and the UK railway industry to provide quality assurance of external providers that deliver training and assessment in industry competencies. To achieve this, NSAR's experienced quality team carries out regular assurance assessments of the providers.

NSAR wanted to demonstrate that its assurance assessments were 'best in class', but recognized that they carried only its own stamp of authority. Its assessment process lacked the added credibility of endorsement by a respected third party.

NSAR successfully addressed this challenge through independent BSI assessment against ISO 19011:2018, the international standard for auditing management systems. NSAR's 100% BSI assessment 'score' clearly demonstrates to its own board, to Network Rail, to training and assessment providers, and to the wider industry, that the quality of its assurance assessments is of the highest standard.

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“We had previously worked successfully with BSI on our certification to ISO 44001, the global standard for collaborative working. We wanted BSI’s statement of our compliance against ISO 19011 to sit alongside this – and alongside the NSAR logo – to recognize the thoroughness of our assurance process for external providers. This has been fully demonstrated by the 100% compliance we achieved in our BSI assessment”

Tracey Troth, Head of
Quality Assurance, NSAR

Client challenge

NSAR fulfils a major, complex and critical role. It is tasked by the UK rail industry to play a key part in the process of providing the skills needed for the increasing demands of a modern railway. It is focused on supporting the industry to develop people and on inspiring excellence in the way skills and competencies are delivered.

A key aspect of its work is to assess and assure the quality of programmes delivered by external providers, so the sector can be confident of a pool of skilled and competent people. NSAR’s quality assurance team is rich in rail industry knowledge and experience, typically as training or assessment professionals. But to benefit fully from this expertise, NSAR wanted the credibility of an independent ‘stamp of approval’ to prove the rigour of its assurance process for training and assessment providers.

BSI solution

NSAR’s answer lay in independent assessment by BSI against ISO 19011:2018, a globally recognized standard that can be aspired to by any organization that needs to plan and conduct internal or external audits of management systems or manage an audit programme for auditing management systems.

Through BSI’s rigorous and objective assessment process, NSAR was able to demonstrate complete compliance with the requirements of ISO 19011. NSAR showed, for example, that its provider assurance assessments followed guidance on the principles of auditing, managing an audit programme and conducting management system audits, as well as on the evaluation of competence of individuals involved in the audit process.

By achieving a maximum of 100% in BSI’s tough assessment, NSAR can now demonstrate excellence to all its stakeholders – as well as impressing upon training and assessment providers the importance of assurance visits, and of their own adherence to the highest standards.



Why BSI?

“BSI is a nationally recognized and respected brand, and that includes the rail industry. Having our systems accredited by BSI strengthens our brand reputation in the field of quality assurance.” Tracey Troth