

F Gas re-training and **you...**

Practical skills
Underpinning knowledge
Leak testing
Energy efficiency
Pressure enthalpy



This leaflet answers some basic questions about the re-training and assessment required by the F Gas Regulations, and is aimed at both operatives and employers.

As well as being familiar with the new F Gas regulatory requirements and having up-to-date knowledge, operatives should be able to successfully apply fundamental theories and demonstrate good working practices.



What can be expected from the re-training and assessment process?

1. Additional knowledge to apply in everyday work including:
 - fault diagnostics using pressure enthalpy calculations
 - direct and indirect leak testing techniques
 - component installation, commissioning and maintenance
 - good pipe jointing techniques
 - the environmental impact of refrigerants
 - the latest legal requirements
2. A thorough practical assessment by a qualified and experienced assessor on an individual test rig to check that the operative's knowledge can be safely applied in practice.
3. A rigorous and challenging theory exam set by independent industry experts under strict exam conditions.
4. A quality assurance programme to ensure that the training provider or assessment centre chosen is operating to a pre-defined high standard. This is performed by the nationally recognised awarding bodies City & Guilds and ConstructionSkills and includes:
 - regular checking of all internal procedures
 - an annual independent inspection by the awarding body
 - central monitoring of assessment results and pass rates

What are the benefits to employers?

Employers will experience a host of benefits by having their employees undertake the F Gas re-training and assessment including:

- reassurance that the skills of their employees are up-to-date with the current legal F Gas standard.
- confirmation that employees understand why they do something, not just how to do it.
- improved ability for a business to deliver reliable, efficient and leak-free systems to its clients.
- knowledge that the legal responsibilities are being complied with because only certified individuals are employed to carry out work on F Gas systems.
- an EU-recognised qualification that allows operatives to work legally throughout the EU – unlike the previous refrigerant handling certificates, which are only valid in the UK and expire in July 2011.



Which level of F Gas qualification is the right one?

There are four categories of qualification:

- **category 1** – leakage, recovery, install, service and maintain systems containing or designed to contain 3kg or more of refrigerant charge
- **category 2** – leak check, install, service and maintain systems containing or designed to contain less than 3kg of refrigerant charge (6kg if hermetically sealed)
- **category 3** – recovery of refrigerant from appliances and systems containing less than 3 kg (6 kg if hermetically sealed)
- **category 4** – leakage checking of systems without breaking into the refrigerant circuit

The F Gas certification is designed to meet legal requirements under the F Gas Regulations, but only with regard to equipment, refrigerants and the environment. The route for the qualification of trainees, apprentices and those without prior experience is still through NVQ/SVQ programmes, part of which includes F Gas assessment. Most people working in installation, service and maintenance of stationary RAC systems will normally need to take the Category 1 qualification to cover the full range of skills necessary.

Most assessment centres offer 2 – 4 day training programmes and, as training needs vary from person to person, your training requirements should be discussed with the preferred approved centre. Rest assured that anyone training or taking an assessment will be learning with others who have a similar level of expertise in stationary refrigeration, air conditioning and heat pump work.

Finally, the majority of candidates greatly benefit from the extra training, helping them to feel more confident about passing the assessments.



Which qualification should I take?

Two awarding bodies, City & Guilds and ConstructionSkills, have qualifications that are recognised as meeting the criteria of EU legislation (EC 303/2008) and are assessed against exactly the same knowledge and performance criteria. The main differences are:

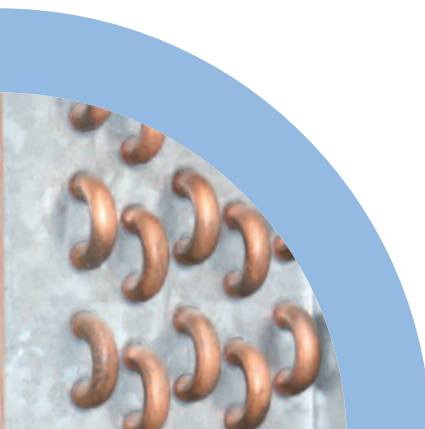
ConstructionSkills

- Provides a photocard and certificate, valid for five years, to those who successfully complete their assessment.
- The assessment consists of a written examination using an open-book multiple-choice exam paper and a practical assessment appropriate to the category undertaken.

City & Guilds

- Provides a certificate with no expiry date which is independently accredited against the National Qualification and Credit Framework.
- The assessment consists of an on line theory test with a changing bank of questions and a practical assessment appropriate to the category undertaken.

Both awarding body qualifications are accepted for those wishing to join the ACRIB voluntary register of individuals. They are also a legal requirement for company F Gas certification with REFCOM, Bureau Veritas or Quidos.



Frequently asked questions about F Gas re-training and certification

Why do I need an F Gas certificate?

An F Gas certificate is a legal requirement for everyone whose work involves the installation, service, maintenance or commissioning of refrigeration air conditioning and heat pump systems containing or designed to contain HFC refrigerant.

When do I need to have it?

You must have achieved your new F Gas certificate by 4th July 2011 to continue to carry out this work. Older qualifications 2078 or J01 are acceptable as temporary evidence only until this date. There are fines and penalties for anyone using unqualified operatives.

Where do I go to get the certificate?

Lists of centres who offer the qualifications are available at either:

CITB J11/J12/J13/J14

www.cskills.org/centreandschool/bes/centres.aspx

City & Guilds 2079

www.cityandguilds.com/24432.html

Who can I talk to about the F Gas qualifications?

If you have any queries about the delivery of F Gas qualifications you can contact the awarding body concerned at:

City & Guilds

Customer Relations, City & Guilds, 1 Giltspur Street, London, EC1A 9DD

Email: centresupport@cityandguilds.com or

learnersupport@cityandguilds.com

www.cityandguilds.com

CITB ConstructionSkills

Bircham Newton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE31 6XG

Email: information.centre@cskills.org or

bes.enquiry@cskills.org

www.cskills.org

How much will it cost to get the F Gas certificate?

Individual training providers have details of course, assessment and certification fees, and there are lots of ways of preparing, such as on line learning, written study booklets and training courses. The costs depend on the amount of training days required, but this should not be a primary consideration. Reducing the amount of training time could be a false economy if a candidate is not sufficiently prepared to take the exam.

Where can I get answers to questions about the F Gas and ODS Regulations?

F Gas support offers a national helpline and website – run on behalf of DEFRA – with detailed guidance on the regulatory requirements.

F Gas Support helpline: 0161 874 3663

F Gas Support helpdesk: fgas-support@enviros.com

www.defra.gov.uk/fgas

What if I am new to the industry or want to improve other skills?

SummitSkills is the Sector Skills Council for the HVACR sector developing National Occupational Standards, approved training and promoting careers.

See www.goodday.org.uk for more details.

Where can I get more information about industry legislation and updates?

The Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Industry Board is an umbrella association representing trade associations and professional institutes, and liaises with the Government on legislation matters.

See www.acrib.org.uk for more details.

SummitSkills

Vega House, Opal Drive, Fox Milne, Milton Keynes MK15 0DF

Tel: 01908 303960

Email: enquiries@summitskills.org.uk

www.summitskills.org.uk