

General NICEIC Certification

GCS Scheme Requirements

Initial Certification Audit

The initial GCS certification audit will be conducted in two distinct stages: Stage 1 and Stage 2.

Stage 1

The purpose of the Stage 1 is to understand your management system and processes. An audit will be carried out in your premises to determine your readiness for certification.

A Certification Decision Maker will conduct a technical review of the Stage 1 report produced by the Lead Auditor, and review the content against the requirements of the scheme Criteria, the contract, including the audit programme for the full certification cycle, the Stage 1 visit requirements and the reporting requirements.

Stage 2

The purpose of the Stage 2 audit is to evaluate the implementation, including effectiveness, of your management system, and in particular, its processes in relation to principles of the EU Skills GCS document. The Stage 2 audit will take place at your site(s).

A risk based approach to the evaluation of the business auditors will be implemented, once the necessary level of confidence and evidence has been obtained of satisfactory engineer audit.

It shall include at least the following elements:

- a) information and evidence about conformity to all requirements of the Group Competency Scheme (GCS) specification other than normative document;
- b) performance monitoring, measuring, reporting and reviewing against key performance criteria (consistent with the expectations in the applicable management system standard or other normative document);
- c) operational control of your processes;
- d) confirmation that the controls identified within your GCS applies to ALL the operatives under the control of that business unit/region/cell
- e) confirm your structure in relation to the GCS, and the numbers of staff utilised to determine if the GCS has indeed resulted in competent gas engineers (competence evaluators),
- f) specifically, the record of the audit activity will include sufficient audit evidence relating to the interfaces between functions, activities and processes performed, to confirm the effectiveness of your GCS system,
- g) in addition the assessment will examine the business processes used for the allocation of specific "work" from the business service centre to the specific engineer,
- h) an interview with the Manager of the specific Engineer to determine his/her understanding of the competency of the engineer and the "scope" of the engineers' current (Gas Safe Register) and he/she manages the GSR license.
- i) "witness the businesses" auditor/assessor carrying out an evaluation of an engineer to determine that the businesses GCS process & procedures are being implemented,
- j) internal auditing and management review;
- k) management responsibility for your policies;
- l) links between the normative requirements, policy, performance objectives and targets (consistent with the expectations in the applicable management system standard or other normative document), any applicable legal requirements, responsibilities, competence of personnel, operations, procedures, performance data and internal findings and conclusions; to determine whether the system is designed to achieve and is achieving performance improvement; to determine that your organisation adheres to its own policies, objectives and procedures; to identify any relevant enforcement action taken by the appropriate regulatory bodies.

The Stage 2 audit activity and subsequent decision on certification shall be entirely based upon those matters specifically related to the scope of the certification / registration being considered.

NOTE: Specific necessary arrangements for the conduct of the audit may include:

Provision for examining documentation and the access to all processes and areas, records and personnel, for the whole certification cycle and resolution of any complaints. (Provisions may be required to accommodate the presence of observers e.g. UKAS).

Recommendation for Registration

Where there are a small number of minor nonconformities and no major nonconformities, registration shall be recommended providing that corrective actions are adhere to.

Certification will not be granted until the Decision Maker has reviewed, accepted and verified the effectiveness of proposed correction and corrective actions for all non-conformities raised.

Non-Registration

In the event of there being one or more Major nonconformities or an excessive number of minor nonconformities, the Lead Assessor shall not recommend registration. If NICEIC Certification is not able to verify corrective and corrective actions of any major NCRs within 6 months after the last day of the stage 2, another stage 2 will have to be performed before certification being recommended.

Maintaining Registration

The purpose of surveillance visits is to ensure continuing compliance of the company with the certification criteria. The programme of surveillance shall ensure that all elements of the company's management systems are re-assessed over a two-year period. Followed by a re-certification visit in the third year. Visits will be carried out at least annually.

Renewing Registration

A Recertification visit shall normally be conducted two-three months prior to the expiration of the client's registration. The recertification cycle is normally for three years and Recertification visits will therefore normally take place every three years. Should the Decision Maker or Assessor identify that major changes have occurred to the company they may request that a Stage 1 audit is carried out prior to the Recertification audit.

The Recertification visit shall include the following:

- a) a review of all the visit reports for both Head Office and the on-site auditing activities that have been carried out during the previous three year period;
- b) for large clients where over 10 site audits) have occurred in the previous three years, at least 10 reports or 25% of the total number of visits that have taken place, whichever is the greater, will be checked;
- c) re-confirm your structure in relation to the GCS, and the numbers of staff utilised to determine if the GCS has indeed resulted in competent gas engineers (competence evaluators);
- d) verification that all clauses of the GCS Specification have been reassessed over the preceding three year period;;
- e) a review of any major nonconformity found during the preceding three year period and the resulting corrective and preventive actions.
- f) a review of minor nonconformities that have been found over the preceding three year perio;
- g) a review of the client's analysis of audit findings and management reviews;
- h) a re-evaluation of your Management System;
- i) ensuring the effective interaction between all elements of the system;
- j) a reassessment of all requirements of the certification criteria at the visit (ie the 15 elements identified in the GCS specification).

Registration Withdrawal

Management System certification certificates issued by NICEIC Certification are at times subject to changes, withdrawal or cancellation. Changes and cancellations may be made by your request; by contract withdrawal, is typically the result of breaches of regulations relating to registration.

Certificate withdrawal

- a) certification will be withdrawn by NICEIC Certification when the registered company fails to comply with the regulations relating to registration;
- b) fail to pay the fees;
- c) fail to accommodate visits.;
- d) the decision to recommend the withdrawal of certification shall then be communicated to you in writing;
- e) if a satisfactory response is not received within 14 days of the date of recorded despatch, then the Certification Office will conclude the withdrawal of Certificate.

NICEIC Certification don't suspend clients certification. The approach that NICEIC Certification takes to breaches of contract or regulations is via withdrawal of certification. This means that if you want to take part in the scheme, you will have to start the process all over again from initial application.

Use on Niceic Certification Marks

NICEIC Certification does not allow the use of its logo.

Amendments to the GCS Scope

If you wish to amend your scope, a new application will have to be carried out for the extension.

If you wish to reduce your scope, please apply in writing to NICEIC Certification to certification@niceic.com

Confidentiality

All information acquired and held by NICEIC Certification in respect of you and your business, other than that published on the Register(s) of Certificated Businesses, will be held by NICEIC Certification in confidence, except as required by an accreditation body, by law, by Government, by a Scheme Owner or to confirm compliance with these Scheme Rules.

Information acquired will not be disclosed by NICEIC Certification to other third parties without the prior written agreement from you.

Data Protection

1. NICEIC Certification will handle your data in accordance with UK GDPR Legislation. Data will be stored for Certification and registration purposes.
2. NICEIC Certification may keep and use personal data (such as contact details) about officers and the business for all purposes that NICEIC Certification require to maintain the Register of Certificated Businesses and to ensure compliance with the Scheme Rules, including, but not limited to, the disclosure to third parties of the identity of such employees.
3. Unless the business request otherwise, NICEIC Certification may, authorise the dissemination to such persons of sales and marketing materials relating to any services that NICEIC Certification believe would be of a legitimate interest to you. Such dissemination may be made by NICEIC Certification or by other persons authorised by NICEIC Certification. You can update your personal communication preferences via our website, search 'Preference Centre' on www.niceic.com
4. We reserve the right to conduct a credit check on your business.

Conduct

To provide the best service, NICEIC Certification are committed to the wellbeing of you and NICEIC Certification. NICEIC Certification expect individuals using our brands, our services and premises to treat others with courtesy and respect. Verbal abuse, harassment and violence towards NICEIC Certification and others is unacceptable and NICEIC Certification will not hesitate to act, which could lead to prosecution and/or suspension/ cancellation of Certification/services.

Law and Jurisdiction

The Certification process and the validity, construction and performance of these Scheme Rules will be governed by English Law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of these Scheme Rules and conditions will not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision, and any invalid or unenforceable provision will be severable.