



New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 Training & Accreditation

HAUC(UK)/TAG Lane Rental Industry Publication



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Introduction

Section 67 of the New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) 1991 (England and Wales), places a requirement on promoters to have a qualified operative on site at all times, while carrying out street works. Qualifications which match the activities being undertaken must be held by at least one operative on site at all times. The act also places a requirement for sites to be supervised by a person with the prescribed supervisor qualification, although this does not need to be at all times.

The Department for Transport (DfT) sought the help of specialists in the field of safety, excavation and reinstatement of openings in the highway to develop several specifications and assessment documents so that a formal accreditation could be achieved. The DfT then nominated four Awarding Organisations to operate across the UK and appointed the Scottish Works Qualification Register to receive certification of operatives and supervisors who had passed examinations and issue a Street Works Ticket (card).

Since the implementation of the formal accreditation, many changes have been made to the specifications and requirements with which to undertake streetworks, which places the need for a review to be carried out on the suitability of the current regime, to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

In 2016, the DfT changed the restrictions on Awarding Organisations for England, opening up the training and accreditation to any suitable organisation, which gave HAUC(UK) the opportunity for the Training and Accreditation Group (TAG) to review all documentation developed over time, introduce new materials and processes, and implement a computerised examination process with multiple choice questions (MCQ).

The Project

The TAG proposal was to own, review, update, implement and manage the future requirements of Street Works accreditation. The work included a complete overhaul of the reassessment materials and expanding the multiple-choice questions for each technical specification.

It was also recognised that the sector could benefit from further training and accreditation courses; one for highway authority street works inspectors, and one for both highway authority and utility employees covering the administration of noticing and permit schemes. It was proposed that a scoping document would be produced for the assessment materials necessary for these two new qualifications.

The training and accreditation of Street Works were strictly managed by four Awarding Organisations and TAG met regularly with representatives from each, supported by volunteers from both Highway Authorities and Utility Companies. Statistics on the number of operatives and supervisors were produced and an overall assessment on output was determined.

New questions were developed for the computerised examinations, for all four administrations (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland) and this was completed for all Awarding Organisations in July 2021. The project completed all the TAG requirements for the Street Works Accreditation Certificate for 'Safety, Quality and Compliance' with trials showing this to be a valued new addition to all persons who wish to expand their knowledge and application in this field of work.

The Certificate 'Principles of the Management and Coordination of Street and Road Works' unfortunately had to be paused due to the introduction of the DfT Street Manager system and delays with completing the revision of the Code of Practice for the Coordination of Streetworks. Based on this it was determined that the project should be brought to a convenient close, with the potential to submit a new application once remedied.



Outcomes

While the project experienced significant delays due to the volunteer method of management, however the extended duration allowed for significant improvements in the documentation being used across the UK.

There were improvements in some areas with new and comprehensive question banks, and onscreen computerised examinations, although better analysis will be achieved after a full year of operation.

This project has led to nationwide benefits by improving safety around street works and improving the quality of traffic management.

A thorough review and update of the assessment question banks, together with a new assessment strategy that awarding organisations will be required to sign up to, will ensure that the correct competences are demonstrated by candidates before being deemed qualified to undertake streetworks. This will raise candidates' level of competency which should lead to the following outcomes:

- Safer sites for operatives and road users
- Reduced highway occupancy due to improved quality of work, with fewer defects
- Reduced damage to utility assets, avoiding the associated cost of utility strikes
- Completely correct and up-to-date question banks that will be easier to review and update in future, helping to ensure they are always fit for purpose and in line with any changes to relevant codes of practice
- Development of additional qualifications.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges, TAG and HAUC(UK) consider the overall project to have been a great success. The new and comprehensive questions banks, better assessment standards and online examinations will benefit the Street Works industry for many years to come.



TfL Lane Rental Scheme

Optimising customer journeys through the delivery of safer, innovative and sustainable roadworks



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