



CISRS Begins New Era of Training Reform to Meet Future Sector Demands

The Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS) has announced the launch of a major programme of reform, aimed at transforming scaffolding training and expanding apprenticeship opportunities, particularly for young entrants into the sector.

CISRS has today (10 May 2025) confirmed a series of measures that mark the beginning of a steady, considered programme of change. These reforms follow an extensive governance review and are essential to ensure that CISRS provision remains fit for the future needs of the industry and can support a new generation of scaffolding professionals, including school leavers and apprentices.

CISRS Chair Wayne Connolly said of the new developments, “The scaffolding sector needs a training system that is robust, inclusive and which can deliver the skilled workforce of tomorrow.

“This is the start of a progressive programme of change designed to strengthen CISRS, support our centres, and ensure that young people, including school leavers, have more routes into our fantastic industry. We are focused on building a modern, responsive training network that meets real-world needs while maintaining the high standards of safety and competence the sector demands.”

The new programme focuses on strengthening governance, improving the consistency and quality of training delivery and increasing the sector's overall training capacity. A new Quality Committee, reporting directly to the CISRS Board, will oversee training standards, course development, and the management of approved centres. This committee will include representation from employers, educationalists, and centres themselves, and will be chaired by an independent specialist.

Connolly said, “A recent independent perception survey identified clear areas of improvement. Improving on the relatively low Customer Satisfaction (C-SAT) scores the research highlighted will be a key metric for establishing future KPIs for CISRS, the centres and trainers.”

CISRS is a not-for-profit organisation, owned by NASC, the UK’s leading trade body for scaffolding and access, as the recognised employers’ organisation. NASC was asked by the Unite Union to run CISRS and it remains highly regarded as one of the best vocational training standards in the sector.

CISRS enters the digital age

NASC has worked with CISRS recently to develop a detailed strategy, business plan and operational plan and is starting to steadily introduce change, including digitalisation.

Significantly, CISRS will introduce a revised Centre Specification from 1 June 2025, making it easier for training providers to deliver flexible, high-quality learning. Changes include encouraging the positives of enclosed learning environments, improving customer service expectations, and reducing minimum centre heights to enhance capacity in further education, rural and some higher cost real-estate areas such as London.

This will improve learner access to more centres. Measures to digitise training records and improve data collection will also be introduced, helping centres to market more effectively and support

greater learner engagement. This will include the collection of learners who fail courses or have challenges through courses so course modifications and enhancements can be made.

As part of the initial phase, CISRS will also impose an 18-month moratorium on approving new Open-Air Craft Centres within mainland UK, allowing existing centres time to adapt and upgrade to the new standards.

The Board's evidence-led approach highlights the need to expand apprenticeship spaces and ensure access to high-quality, enclosed facilities that can better serve young learners and new entrants. By embracing these reforms, CISRS will help bridge the current gap in regional training access and position itself as a leader in modern, flexible scaffolding training both in the UK and internationally.

Further details and support measures for centres will be announced in the coming months as CISRS builds momentum towards a stronger, future-ready training system.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About CISRS

The Construction Industry Scaffolders Record Scheme (CISRS) is the industry-recognised training and qualification framework for scaffolders in the UK. Established in the 1960s, CISRS sets the standard for safety, competence, and professionalism in scaffolding. The scheme supports ongoing development through structured training, practical assessment, and regular renewal requirements. More than 80,000 scaffolders and access professionals hold valid CISRS cards worldwide (60,000 in the UK), proving their qualifications and commitment to safe working practices.

For more information, visit www.cisrs.org.uk.