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TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

REFERENCES:

PCN/GEN : General requirements for qualification and PCN certification of NDT personnel

DEFINITIONS

"Transitional arrangements" are defined as a system whereby personnel who hold current valid certificates of competence which have been generally recognised and accepted by industry may, subject to the agreement of the BINDT Certification Management Committee, on application and payment of the agreed certification fee and subject to verification of satisfactory performance without significant interruption in the application of the NDT method for which transition is sought, be granted equivalent certification by PCN without having to sit the full initial examination.

All other definitions of terms are detailed in the current edition of PCN/GEN.

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1. PURPOSE

The aim of Transitional Arrangements is to enable the PCN Scheme to be extended to offer certification in methods and industry sectors where:

- PCN certification is currently unavailable, or
- The British Institute of NDT (BINDT) extends the PCN certification scheme to a new NDT method or creates a new industry sector for certification purposes, or
- there is a recognised demand that personnel certified competent under an alternative third party certification scheme gain PCN certification in order to improve recognition and acceptance of NDT personnel certification, or
- a recognised industry sector second party certification scheme seeks to transfer certified personnel into the PCN Scheme.

In addition, BINDT may award transitional PCN level 3 certification to potential PCN examiners in order to facilitate the implementation of new examinations within the PCN Scheme. The validity of such level 3 certification shall not exceed two years, at which time, in order to recertify, the holder shall be required to pass such theoretical and practical examinations as may be determined by the Certification Management Committee.

Transitional Arrangements shall only be applied when the relevant PCN examination module is available or, if in development, once the examination processes are fully documented and approved.

2. PERIOD OF ARRANGEMENT

Transitional Arrangements will be open for such interim period, as approved by the Certification Management Committee, and as stated in the notices issued announcing the arrangement.

3. CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS

3.1 Applications from third party certification bodies

BINDT shall require demonstration to its satisfaction that the standard of competency applied at the appropriate level by the previous scheme was equivalent to that applied in the PCN Scheme and had been found to be relevant and acceptable to the industry concerned.

Provided this is deemed to be the case, BINDT will award transitional PCN certification with or without examination, as appropriate and according to the agreed arrangement, valid for a period of five years from the date of issue

3.2 Applications from second party certification bodies

A specific arrangement where no independent certification body issued the certificate of competence concerned, e.g., an employer based certification scheme, or a certification scheme administered by a training organisation independent of the employer of the certificated personnel.

Applications shall be submitted in accordance with the requirements agreed during meetings of interested parties convened specifically to formulate the transitional arrangement, and which are published and promulgated by BINDT.

Under such an arrangement, a PCN certificate, valid for a maximum period of five years, will be issued following success in the appropriate PCN recertification examination and any written examinations deemed necessary after a comparison of the PCN Scheme and the scheme seeking transition.

4. VALIDITY OF

ISSUED UNDER TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The period of validity of transitional certification shall be in accordance with the relevant PCN published requirements and any subsequent renewal or extension of the terms of certification shall be bound by the PCN requirements in force at that time.

At the end of the maximum five year period of validity, the PCN transitional certification issued without examination may be revalidated only by recertification. Thereafter, such certificates shall be considered as normal PCN certificates for the purposes of renewal and recertification.

5. APPLICATIONS

Following agreement being reached between the organisation operating the previous scheme and PCN there will be an interim period of time, defined in the notices issued announcing the agreement, during which application by appropriate personnel will be accepted for consideration.

Where the organisation which operated the previous scheme is no longer offering NDT personnel certification, the Certification Management Committee may determine whether transitional arrangements may be opened for individuals holding current valid certification issued under the scheme concerned.

6. APPEALS

Where PCN certification is refused under the terms of Transitional Arrangements then the PCN Complaints and Appeals procedure defined in PCN document CP21 may be utilised by the certificate holder or his employer.

ANNEX A : PROCEDURE

(THE SUBMISSION AND ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS FOR TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS)

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. This document sets out the procedures to be adopted by an existing Personnel Certification Scheme in making application for certificate holders of that scheme to be certificated by BINDT under the terms and conditions set out in Document CP12 (Transitional Arrangements).
- b. The document also covers the procedures to be established by BINDT to examine and assess all such applications, the criteria against which any such application would be assessed and the terms and conditions under which Transitional Arrangements would be promulgated.

2. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

- a. Applications will be considered from any existing NDT Personnel Certification Scheme of which the intention is that it shall be superseded by the PCN Scheme (see Definitions).
- b. Where appropriate, the organisation seeking to establish the transitional arrangement shall set out the scope and conditions of the existing scheme giving:
 - i. its origins and particular areas of operation, e.g. industry or product sector;
 - ii. the documented procedures of the scheme;
 - iii. its structure and organisation;
 - iv. the scope of certificates available;
 - v. an exposition of a comparison between the scheme considered for transition and PCN scheme with specific reference to the equating of levels of certification and examination content (this should be supported by details of examination syllabi, format and typical paper for each method and level). Where there have been significant changes in the scheme relating to certificates which are still valid then full details of these differences shall be included;
 - vi. categories and numbers of certificates extant.
- c. Where it is intended that the organisation shall remain in existence then full details of the anticipated form and nature of its operations shall be presented where they have any relevance to the PCN Scheme.
- d. Application shall in the first place be in writing to The Head of Certification, BINDT Certification Services, The Newton Building, St George's Avenue, Northampton NN2 6JB.

3. TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

- a. Where appropriate, a presentation shall be made by the applicant organisation to an appropriately constituted PCN Transitional Arrangements Committee.
- b. The BINDT Certification Management Committee shall establish a Transitional Arrangements Committee constituted from the Head of Certification and/or member(s) of the Certification Management Committee, supported by other BINDT representative(s) having specific technical expertise relating to the transitional arrangement.
- c. Representatives of the Scheme for which transition is sought will attend a Transitional Arrangements Committee meeting where this is deemed to be necessary.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

- a. No BINDT member of the Committee shall have or have had a direct or indirect interest in the submitting organisation during the previous two years. Where such a situation exists the member shall declare that interest and shall not participate in the examination and assessment of such application and the Certification Management Committee shall appoint a substitute.
- b. All declarations of the Committee shall be treated in the strictest confidence.
- c. The Committee shall sit within 3 months of a valid application being received by the PCN Head of Certification.
- d. Properly recorded minutes shall be taken and held on file by the PCN Head of Certification.

5. ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS

- a. All applications shall be examined by the Head of Certification for correctness of format and presentation with only "acceptable" applications being submitted to the Transitional Arrangements Committee. Where significant anomalies exist the Head of Certification will inform the applicant organisation of the situation and provide guidance on a re-submission.
- b. The applicant organisation shall demonstrate that personnel to be considered for PCN Certification under Transitional Arrangements satisfy the criteria for eligibility set out in the relevant PCN requirements document. Such documents are available from BINDT upon request.
- c. The applicant organisation shall be required to make a presentation to the Transitional Arrangements Committee based on their submission for the implementation of Transitional Arrangements. They may be questioned by the Committee in order to clarify or expand on any aspects relative to the application (N.B., this stage may be considered unnecessary where the scheme under consideration is a well documented third party scheme, especially where it holds a recognizable form of accreditation).
- d. The Committee may agree to the implementation of Transitional Arrangements either in total or in part. Any acceptance may include proposals for the need for "topping-up" by means of current PCN examinations as considered necessary. However, the relevancy of the certification in terms of when it was issued and the acceptability of the industry concerned shall be taken into consideration.

6. IMPLEMENTATION OF A TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT AGREEMENT

- a. The transitional arrangement shall be described in a publicly available document setting out:
 - i. the opening and closing dates
 - ii. conditions of eligibility of individuals seeking transition
 - iii. details of top-up examinations required (where applicable)
 - iv. the validity of transitional certification resulting from the arrangement
 - v. details of fees
 - vi. procedural information
 - vii. guidance for applicants
 - viii. application forms
- b. The period of implementation shall be mutually agreed between BINDT and the organisation which is requesting the transitional arrangement.
- c. Acceptable certificated applicants shall be issued with PCN Certificates valid for a maximum of 5 years from the date of issue. The period of validity could be less than five years.
- d. During the initial period of validity any extension to scope of the certification held shall be by taking the relevant recertification examination as well as the appropriate PCN supplementary examination.
- e. At the end of the initial period of validity, the appropriate PCN recertification examination shall be passed before the certificate is revalidated.