

NEWS RELEASE

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Skills passport provides the pathway for cleaning industry

The skills passport scheme for the UK cleaning industry is introduced at the British Cleaning Industry Conference in Solihull on 22nd September 2005. The Pathway Card will allow those employed in the industry to record their skills, qualifications and experience onto an electronic card, and employers to view this information online to verify competence and fitness for work.

Pathway Card has been developed on behalf of the industry by Asset Skills in partnership with industry bodies BICSc and CSSA, and supported by the British Cleaning Council.

What will the passport achieve?

The Pathway Card is designed to signpost the career journey within the cleaning industry, and for employers to encourage personal development amongst their employees.

The passport will help solve the problems of uneven induction across the sector and the problems faced with staff working in remote teams needing to represent the companies whose premises they are cleaning. The industry's image and people's confidence in the service it provides will also improve. The aim of all the partners is to improve the image and reputation of the cleaning industry.

What will the scheme consist of?

The Pathway Card is an electronic CV for cleaners. Unlike managers, cleaners are less likely to use a CV or have the facility to produce one, and this card effectively does it for them. The Pathway Card includes all the information concerning an employee's records of training (both in-house and certificated) and details of past employment, making it an ideal career tracking tool that identifies and celebrates the competence & professionalism of the individual.

Employers will also be able to track an employee's previous training and use the inbuilt toolkit to decide on and map out the most appropriate training needed for that individual.

With a structured induction programme for employers to measure themselves against and gain accreditation for best practice, the aim is to provide guidance on each stage of work preparation. The actual skills passport will provide an individual record with:

- Proof of identity and entitlement to work
- Induction training undertaken
- Employment history
- Training undertaken and skills gained as well as equipment used
- Certificates and qualifications achieved
- A personal career development plan
- Skills and qualifications pathways and career progression

Richard Beamish of Asset Skills commented: "The Pathway Card effectively creates a portable online CV for cleaners. The system records not just qualifications and formal training, but also experience, which represents fitness and competence to work.

"Pathway Card is based upon a best practice induction framework that provides common standards of initial training for new entrants."

Martyn Vesey of the CSSA said: "This card will revolutionise the way that the cleaning industry operates. We hope that it will encourage cleaners to make a record of their achievements, whether it is through in-house training or a recognised accreditation such as NVQ (National Vocational Qualifications) or BICSc. This is an exciting development for our industry and for those wishing to pursue cleaning as a career."

Judith West, Chairman of the BCC said: "The Pathway card has not been designed to trip up workers but to protect them and provide a tool for them to record their achievements and to enhance their career opportunities. Many cleaners don't even have a CV, so this will be an excellent way for them and their employers to access their records.

“Similarly, companies will now be able to check cleaners’ credentials while avoiding the pitfalls concerned with illegal staff including increased liability on health & safety and confidentiality.”

Many major public and private employers, professional bodies and trade associations have already given commitment to taking the idea forward, and a number of employers are piloting the scheme from September.

The Pathway Card is powered by Purple Passports, who have already implemented successful skills passport schemes for the food, construction and hospitality industries.

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