

# BLUE flame CERTIFICATION

## NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR INDIVIDUAL GAS FITTING OPERATIVES

# SCHEME RULES NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR INDIVIDUAL GAS FITTING OPERATIVES

### 1 Introduction

This document describes the Scheme Rules applied by Blue flame Certification for the operation of the United Kingdom Gas Industry's 'Nationally Accredited Certification Scheme for Individual Gas Fitting Operatives'

Definitions of terminology utilised throughout this document can be found in Appendix 1.

This document explains how an individual can obtain Certification by undergoing Assessment at Blue flame Certification Limited Assessment centre (or one of its approved Third Party Partner Assessment Centres).

Certification for successful candidates may only be achieved within the Scope of Accreditation awarded by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to Blue Flame Certification against the requirements of BS EN ISO/IEC 17024:2012

### 2 Scope

These Scheme Rules cover the process necessary for the Certification of an Individual Gas Fitting Operative by Blueflame Certification. These Rules only apply to Assessment and do not cover any prior training.

The Blue flame Certification Scheme assesses an Individuals competence to carry out safe gas work. The Scheme is not intended to assess competence in other areas which may be undertaken within the complete range of activity. Note 2 details non gas safety legislation and other requirements that are outside the Scheme scope. All operatives and employers should be aware of their responsibilities and statutory duties that cover their range of work.

### 3 Policies

Blue flame Certification will make available Assessments to all individuals who meet the Scheme and/or Operational Requirements (see clause 5) regardless of race, colour, creed, ethnic origin, nationality, marital status, gender, political affiliations or beliefs, age or disability.

Blue flame Certification will take all steps necessary to offer Assessments to individuals with special needs.

Individuals are invited to indicate any special needs at the time of Application and each situation will be individually considered.

### 4 Criteria of The National ACS Scheme

Gas Safety criteria for the Scheme is devised by Standards Setting Body (SSB) under the direction of the Health and Safety Executive. The Scheme is modular in nature which undergoes regular change and amendment in line with standards and statutory requirements amendments.

The complete list is available on request to Blue flame Certification and the criteria against which an applicant is assessed against are available from GSR via their website.

The Scheme consists of a number of specific work areas:

Domestic Natural Gas (NG)

Domestic Liquefied Natural Gas (LPG)

Commercial (NG and LPG)

Commercial Catering (NG and LPG)

Emergency Service Provider/Meter Installer (NG)

A number of specialist modules eg. Swimming Pool Boilers, Instrumentation Technicians, Fusion Jointing etc.

Where competence has already been proven a number of changeover modules are available which avoids the duplication of assessing common areas.

The combining of assessments and particularly packaging of modules enables assessments to be tailored to individuals needs and work areas.

For advice on appropriate modules candidates should contact their nearest Blue flame Certification Approved Assessment centre by ringing 0845 194 90 31

### 5 Application

An application form will be provided by Assessment centres and this must be completed with all details prior to commencement of Assessment.

At the time of first attendance at the Assessment Centre, the Assessor, Centre Manager or Administrative Assistant shall complete the following actions:

- If the applicant is previously unknown to the centre or Gas Safe Register the document type

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presented by the applicant as proof of identity and its identification number will be checked and recorded on the Application Form 017.

A number of documents are suggested as means of proof:

- A current valid Passport
- A current valid Driving Licence (photo ID card type)
- A photo ID card issued by the UK Border Agency or;
- A valid Home Office issued work permit, Assessment accompanied by a current international passport
- Other Photo I/D issued by any other Governmental agency

In exceptional cases, e.g. students or trainees, not in possession of any of the above identification, the following examples of suitable identification are acceptable:

- Birth certificate
- Travel pass, including a photograph
- Under 21 ID cards issued by local authority etc

The completion of the above requirements and signatory verification by the Assessment centre and candidate will constitute a Contractual agreement between candidate and centre to deliver the service as outlined within these Scheme Rules.

The Application Form requires a declaration of Category by the individual requesting Assessment.

There are basically 3 Categories available that describe a candidate's eligibility:

:

seeking to renew expiring or expired certificates of gas safety competence i.e. HSC, ACoP, ACS or Gas Services S/NVQ's/QCF

**Category 1** applicants are experienced gas fitting operatives from within or outside of the UK, i.e.:

- i. Seeking to renew expiring or expired certificates of gas safety competence or gas utilisation qualification.
- ii. Seeking assessment and certification to extend their range of gas work (see 9.1.1 iii).
- iii. Foreign nationals seeking to obtain certificates of gas safety competence enabling them to meet UK gas work requirements must present evidence of their gas fitting qualifications and experience to the AC. Translations of this information will be necessary when not presented in English and must be independently translated by a sworn translator of English and include an appropriate recognition statement confirming the translators eligibility.
- iv. Seeking to obtain ACS certificates of gas safety competence but hold a gas utilisation qualification e.g. GCS, RCF, QCF, RQF or S/NVQs.

**Category 2** applicants shall have evidence that they:

Hold qualifications detailed in Guidance Note 8 and provide written evidence to the AC confirming that they have undertaken work experience and training for the range of assessments to be undertaken. That evidence shall include:  
a written statement from a registered business detailing precisely the type, range and volume of gas work carried out.  
a certificate of achievement from the training provider.

or

Are undertaking a RQF award which has a requirement of gas work to be included in the award, and where ACS certification is an integral part of that award.

or

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Meet the requirements of guidance note 8a (Candidates with Gas work experience gained legally from sectors of Industry outside of the scope of the Gas Safety Installation & Use Regulations).

Applicants that do not satisfy the criteria of Categories 1 or 2 shall be classified as a new entrant to the industry and considered as Category 3 applicants.

### **Category 3**

applicants are new entrants to the gas industry and, as such, they are without a relevant related qualification and/or experience, entering employment for the first time or changing career and are therefore ineligible to undertake any ACS Assessments.

Category 3 applicants shall have evidence that they:

Have undertaken a managed learning programme (MLP) recognised by the SSB which meets the requirements of IGEM/IG/1. or

Alternatively, these applicants shall undertake a RQF/QCF award which has a requirement of gas work to be included in the award.

### **6 Assessment**

Operatives wishing to be assessed under the scheme are able to 'tailor' the Assessments undertaken to reflect their areas of work.

Assessment criteria laid down consists of a number of elements against which candidates are required to demonstrate competence.

For candidates holding an ACS Certificate a suite of Re-Assessment modules may be taken which consists of a reduced Assessment as compared with 'Initial Assessment' for non ACS Certificate Holders.

ACS Certificate holders who wish to extend their areas of work are required to undertake 'Initial ACS Assessments' in those areas.

For both 'Initial' and 'Re-Assessment', candidates are required to complete written and/or practical Assessments which are dependent upon the type of Assessment undertaken.

If necessary candidates may be asked Oral questions by an Assessor.

Attendance at Assessment centres requires that all candidates must adhere to all health, safety and conduct requirements as indicated by the Assessment centre.

The Assessment centre will also provide:

tools and equipment necessary to carry out practical tasks. Candidates with special needs who bring their own tools will require to have them approved by an Assessor prior to their use.

Protective clothing and equipment as necessary.

Reference, normative, industry and legislative documentation will be provided to enable the candidate to select information to answer 'open book' questions. In the event that the candidate provides own material or sources adapted from training material then this will be required to be approved by an Assessor prior to use.

All necessary manufacturers' instructions will be provided

The Assessment centre will indicate to candidates on completion of Assessments a provisional outcome and will supply Form 024 prior to the candidate leaving the centre. Candidates will be informed that Internal Verification is required to be carried out and if this results in a differing view to the provisionally reported outcome then the candidate will be informed immediately. Candidates will also be informed that any decision made by the Assessment centre is a recommendation only.

The process of Assessment, referral, re-Assessment and supply of information to The Gas Safe Register™ is contained in Flowcharts in Tables 1 to 3 appended to these Scheme Rules

Candidates will be informed that the final decision on certification lies with Blue flame Certification.

Assessment centres will provide Blue flame Certification with all necessary paperwork to enable a certification decision to be made within 20 working days of completion of module or suite of modules. Candidates may give permission to the centre if they wish this to be extended.

Blue flame Certification will endeavour to make the certification decision, issue Certificates as well as download information to the National Database within 20 working days of receipt of correct and complete candidate paperwork from the Assessment centre. Although given in good faith, times quoted for the provision of the Services are intended as estimates only, and are not therefore to be treated as being of the essence of this Contract.

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Transmission of a candidates result to Blue flame Certification may be delayed for a period of 90 working days subsequent to the completion of a module or suite of modules with the candidate's permission. After 90 working days the Assessment Centre has to transmit the candidates paperwork to Blue flame Certification. After 90 working days the candidate will have to re-take any incomplete Assessments

The application Form completed by candidates includes a disclaimer box which if ticked by the candidate will mean that an employer has not been given permission to receive information regarding results of assessments or copies of successful candidates certificates if requested.

### 7 Certificates

The Certificate of Assessment issued, which is designed to prevent counterfeiting, contains the following information:

Blue flame Certification name

The UKAS registered logo with Blue flame Certification UKAS registration number

Date of certificate issue

Contact telephone number of Blue flame Certification

The national insurance number of the certificate holder.

The date of birth of the certificate holder

A description of each gas safety assessment with its issue and expiry date (which will be 5 years from the date each assessment was completed).

The certificate holder's signature

On the reverse side of the Certificate:

A clear warning statement that:

'the certificate is only valid when presented on original paper by the certificate holder, duly signed. Certificate photocopies are not evidence of competence and should not be accepted as such.

Statements also to the effect that:

'Confirmation that the certificate holder is competent in the gas safety assessment(s) contained on the certificate, and is also employed by a Gas Safe Register™ registered business, can be obtained from Gas Safe Register™, Viabes 3 Viabes Business Park, Jays Close, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG22 4LT

'Certificates are not valid beyond the expiry date or if the appropriate core gas safety assessment is not held or has expired'.

'Certificates remain the property of Blue flame Certification and must be surrendered on demand'

Note: Non payment of agreed Fees to either an Assessment Centre or Blue flame Certification will result in the candidate's paperwork not being processed for Certification purposes.

### 8 Suspension and Withdrawal of Certificates

Any misuse of the Blue flame Certification Logo, breach of these Scheme Rules or failure to pay any agreed Fees will result in the suspension or withdrawal of Certification.

Corrective actions may be agreed to be implemented, however, if these are not implemented within 3 months form notification withdrawal procedures will be implemented.

Whilst suspension of Certification is in force the certificated operative must cease carrying out any work as described within the Certificate of Competence.

In both cases of suspension or withdrawal of Certification Gas Safe Register will be informed of Blue Flame Certification's actions.

When a Certificated operative receives notice of withdrawal of Certification, he/she will immediately return Certificates to Blue flame Certification and cease carrying out work within the scope of the withdrawn Certification. Withdrawal of an Individuals Certificate will be made public via suitable industry publications and details will be forwarded to the National Database.

There is a right of appeal as outlined in 10.

### 9 Complaints

Individuals have a right of complaint against any aspect of the Scheme.

Complaints must be in writing and can be addressed to either an Assessment centre or Blue flame Certification.

Complaints will be investigated and formally reported to the complainant as laid down in procedures available at all Blue flame Certification Assessment centres.

All individuals raising a complaint have a right of Appeal subsequent to any decision as described in 10.

### 10 Appeals

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Any decision not to issue, suspend or withdraw Certification and results of a formal complaint investigation may be appealed against.

Appeals must be notified to Blue flame Certification in writing addressed to the Scheme Manager (address below) and a remittance of £200 submitted which will be refunded in full if the Appeal is successful.

If the Appellant holds current and appropriate Certification he/she will remain Certificated until the outcome of the Appeal is known.

Individuals have the right to representation at an Appeal hearing after notifying Blue flame Certification that they wish to be represented.

Representation may be by a friend, colleague, trade union representative or legal counsel.

The Appeal must be notified in writing to the Scheme Manager of Blue flame Certification within 30 days of a complaint decision.

Blue flame Certification will convene an Appeals panel, consisting of the Scheme Manager and a member of the Governing Board nominated by the chairman with the date notified to the Appellant in writing.

The Individual has the right to object to any member of the Panel and Blue flame Certification will re-constitute an alternative. The Appeal will be held within 30 days of receipt of request from the Appellant with the results notified in writing to the Appellant within 5 days after the close of the Appeal hearing.

The Individual has a final right of Appeal against the initial Appeal's findings and an independent arbiter will be appointed to mutual agreement, whose decision will be final.

Note: Non-payment of agreed Fees to either an Assessment Centre or Blue flame Certification will result in the candidate's paperwork not being processed for Certification purposes.

### 11. General

Blue flame Certification has the right to carry out verification and on-going monitoring of a Certificated Operative as deemed necessary during the period of validity of Certification (usually 5 years from the date of Certification).

This monitoring will be carried out to determine continuing satisfactory performance and/or to investigate any evidence received indicating lack of competence.

An Individual's responsibilities, duty of care and statutory requirements are not diminished on receipt of Certification.

### 12 Publicity

Holding of Certification by an Individual does not confer the right to use of either Blue flame Certification or UKAS logos unless an agreement is in place.

Scope of Certification held by an Individual must be made available to public domain and such information may be provided by either Blue flame Certification or The Gas Safe Register™

### 13 Confidentiality

Individuals details are held and used as indicated on the Application for Assessment Form by Blue flame Certification subject to the Data Protection Act (latest edition).

Organisations that are subject to the Scheme and its Rules will ensure that they and all staff keep in confidence any private or confidential information relating to an Individual applying for or holding Certification under the Scheme.

### 14 Fees

The costs of Assessment and related Certification Fees will be levied by the Assessment centre that the candidate applies to.

If Certificated candidates require a duplicate Certificate, Blue flame Certification will levy a Fee

If a duplicate Certificate is required due to error on the part of Blue flame Certification, one will be provided free of charge

***If Certificated candidates do not receive a Certificate within 3 working months of completing assessment(s) a replacement will be supplied free of charge. After this period if a replacement certificate is required then a Fee for the replacement will be charged.***

### 15 Gas Safe Register™ Registrations

Individuals must be both Gas Safe Register™ registered (either as a sole trader or via their employer) and in possession of a valid certificate of competence for the areas of work concerned, before any gas work within the scope of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations- latest edition is carried out.

Upon successful completion of an Assessment(s) and Certification issued,

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Blue flame Certification will download the scope of Certification to The Gas Safe Register™ updating the National Database of Gas Fitting Operatives.

Individuals should contact The Gas Safe Register™ for details of Registration and issue of Gas Safe Register™ cards.

### 16 Contacts

Blueflame Certification Ltd  
Unit 26, Chatterley Whitfield Enterprise Centre  
Biddulph Road  
Chatterley Whitfield  
Stoke on Trent  
Staffordshire  
ST6 8UW  
T 0845 194 9031

Gas Safe Register™  
Viables 3  
Viables Business Park  
Jays Close  
Basingstoke  
Hampshire  
RG22 4LT  
Tel 0800 408 5577

UKAS  
2 Pine Trees  
Chertsey Lane,  
Staines-upon-Thames  
TW18 3HR

### Note 1- Definitions

#### Scheme

The Nationally Accredited Scheme for Individual Gas Fitting Operatives, as detailed within the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations- latest edition.

#### Scheme Rules

This publication

#### UKAS

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service, the National Body which Accredits Certification Bodies (such as Blueflame Certification) and recognised by the United Kingdom Government.

#### Blue flame Certification

Blue flame Certification Limited, accredited by UKAS for operating the Scheme described within this document.

#### The Gas Safe Register™

Appointed by the UK Health and Safety Executive to operate the National Database of Gas Fitting Operatives which contains details of Individuals participating in this Scheme.

#### Individual

Any person applying for Assessment and Certification, undertaking of Assessments or a holder of a Certificate(s).

#### Certification

Certificate of competence issue subsequent to successful Assessment

#### Assessment

An Individuals activity that when complete demonstrates competence.

#### Assessment Centre

Blue flame Certification Limited location and other locations approved by Blue flame Certification Limited

#### Assessor

A person Approved by Blue flame Certification who is qualified to supervise and assess candidates

#### Verification

The process of verifying candidate's examination paperwork by an Assessment Centre's Internal Verifier.

Blueflame Certification Ltd  
Registered Office:  
6 Marsh Parade,  
Newcastle under Lyme,  
Staffordshire, ST5 1DU  
Registered in England and Wales  
No 5182566

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## NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR INDIVIDUAL GAS FITTING OPERATIVES

### NON GAS SAFETY LEGISLATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS WHICH ARE OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE ACS SCHEME

#### General

Examples of non-gas safety legislation and other requirements that are outside the scope of the scheme, and are not covered by competency assessment, are detailed below. This is not a definitive listing but is intended to provide guidance to the breadth of legislation that covers the work of gas fitting operatives.

Candidates are encouraged to secure relevant qualifications and training in all areas of work they carry out. Assessment Centres may offer assessments in other areas of work, such as legislation, safety, electrical and plumbing, but such assessments are not features of the Accredited Certification Scheme for Gas Operatives.

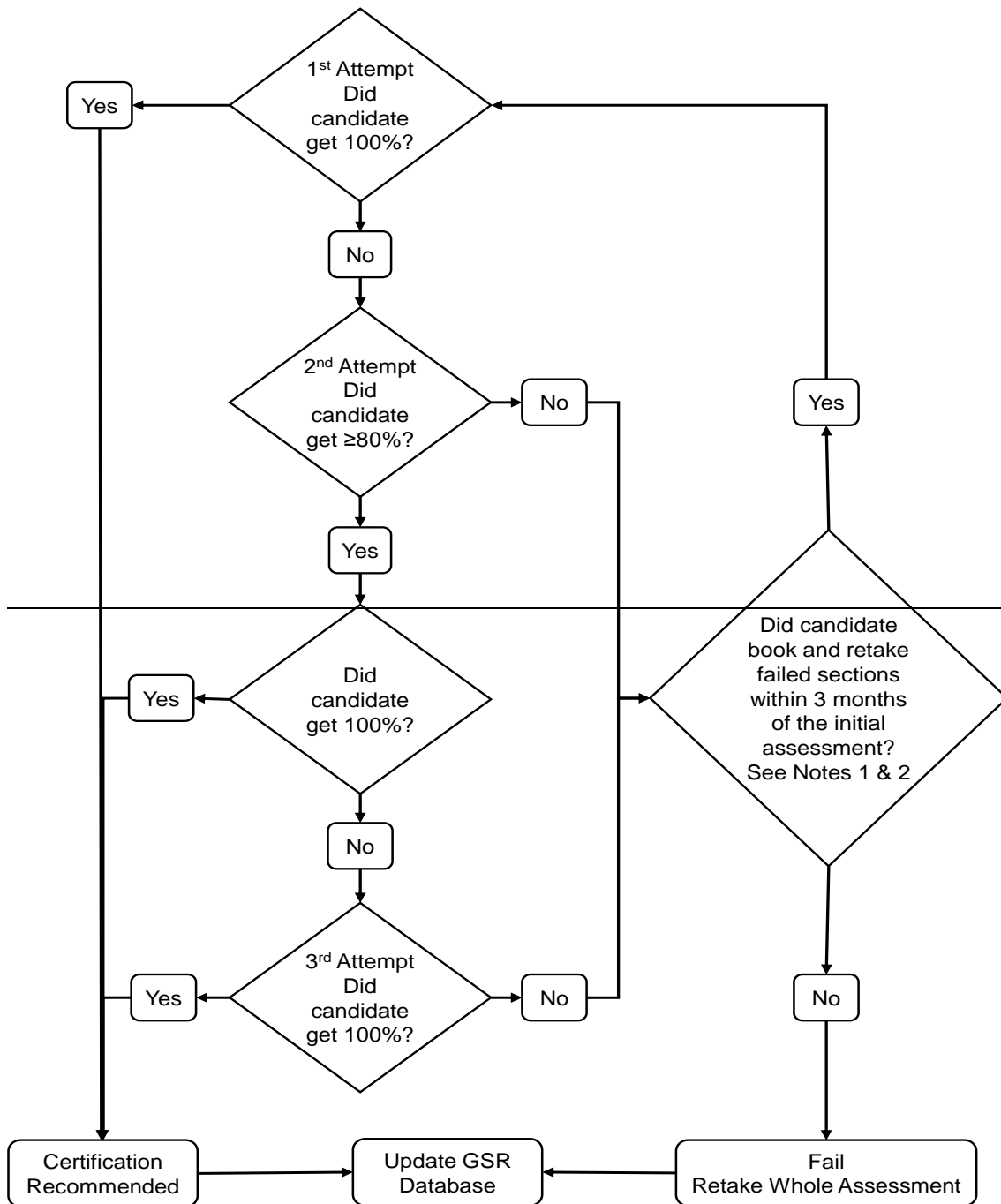
#### Legislation etc, relevant to the work of gas fitting operatives but outside the scope of the scheme

- Gas Safety (Management) Regulations. (Not directly work related).
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act, including:
  - \* Working at height, for example ladder work and working from steps, in activities such as working on roofs, installing flues, and accessing roof spaces.
  - \* Building work, for example penetrating structures, in activities such as making openings for flues, ventilation, and pipes. Also, for example, lifting flooring, and notching joists.
  - \* Sweeping chimneys - that is sweep work associated with, but not involving, disconnection and refitting a gas appliance.
- The Electricity at Work Regulations.
- The Electricity Supply Regulations (as amended).
- British Standard 7671 (IEE Wiring Regulations).
- Construction (Design & Management) Regulations.
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, for example risk assessment and associated procedures.
- The Provision of Work Equipment Regulations, for example tools and equipment are suitable for the use they are going to be put to.
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations, for example lifting and handling, moving appliances, pipework, and equipment.
- Workplace Regulations, for example workplace ensures health, safety and welfare.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations, for example that PPE is fit and proper for the purpose intended and will be maintained and replaced as required.
- The Construction (Head Protection) Regulations, for example working in obligatory 'head protection zones'.
- The Noise at Work Regulations, for example working in 'hearing protection zones'.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations, for example recognition and protection from exposure to hazardous materials used by the trade.
- Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations, for example work on insulated pipes and asbestos pipe.
- Control of Lead at Work Regulations, for example work on water pipe.
- Water Undertakers Bylaws and British Standard 5449 and British Standard 6700, for example any water system pipework or equipment.
- Building Regulations, for example those that are non-gas specific/related, and protected shafts.
- Factories Act.
- Gas Meter Regulations.
- Gas Quality Regulations.
- Boiler (Efficiency) Regulations.
- The Pressure Systems and Transportable Gas Container Regulations 1989.
- The Gas Meters (Information on Connection and Disconnection) Regulations

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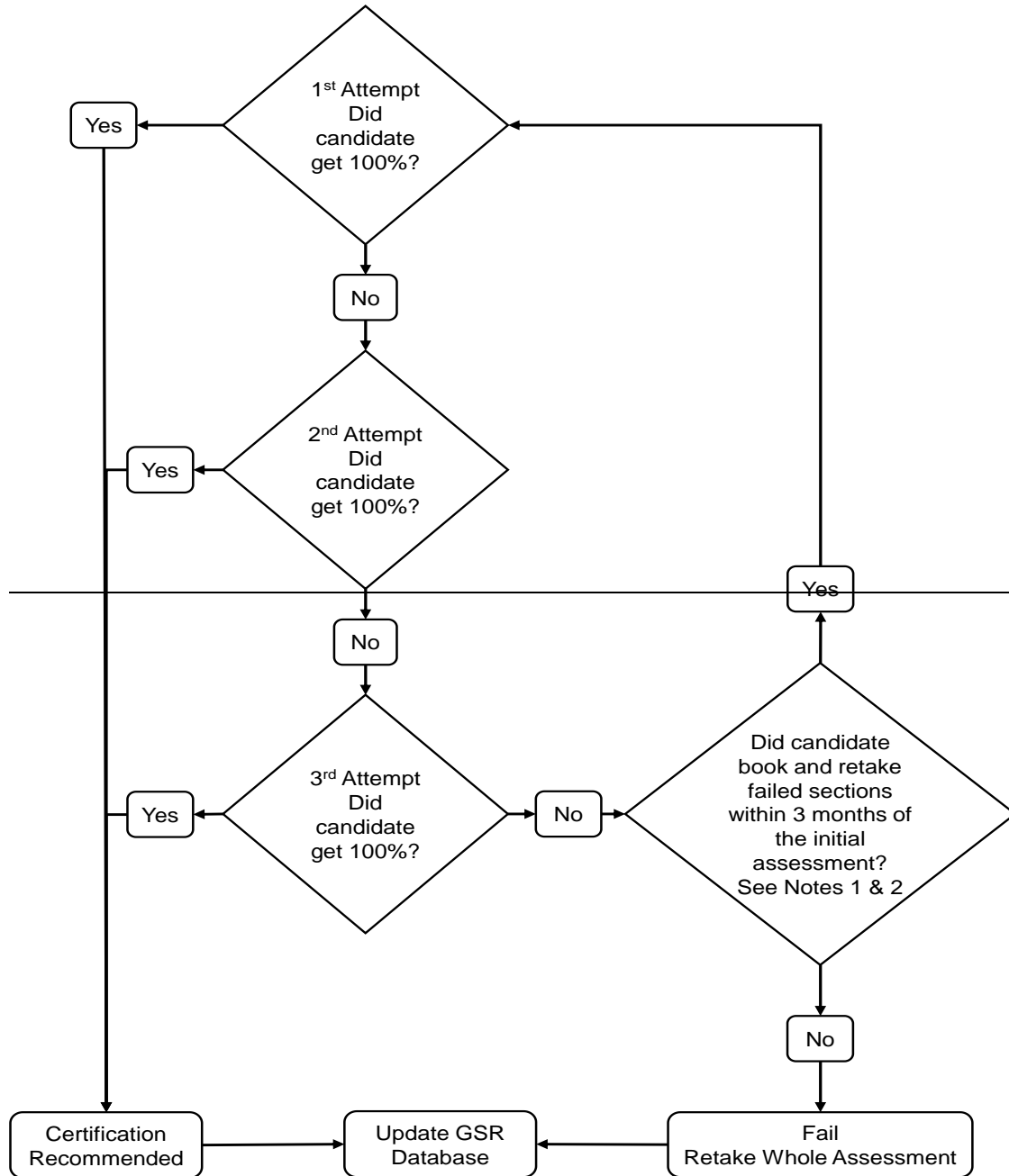
## NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR INDIVIDUAL GAS FITTING OPERATIVES

• Table 1: Initial Theory Assessment Result Flow Chart





**Table 2: Initial Practical Assessment Result Flow Chart**



**Table 3: Re-Assessment Result Flow Chart**

