

RP404 Refresher Course

Refresher – Air Sampling of Asbestos and MMMF and Requirements for a Certificate of Reoccupation Following Clearance of Asbestos

Course specification

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Section 1

About BOHS

BOHS - The Chartered Society for Worker Health Protection

BOHS is the Chartered Society for Worker Health Protection. Our vision is to create a healthy working environment for everyone by preventing exposure to hazardous substances in the workplace.

Founded in 1953, we have developed over the last 60 years into a highly respected and influential body on workplace health issues, working closely with organisations in the UK and overseas to promote our vision. We are a registered charity, professional society and a member of the International Occupational Hygiene Association, which is recognised as a non-government organisation by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

We were awarded a Royal Charter in 2013 in recognition of our pre-eminent role in protecting worker health.

BOHS is a membership organisation, open to anyone who has an interest in workplace health issues, and we have over 1,800 members in 57 countries.

BOHS qualifications – the quality choice

We are the leading awarding body in our field. Our UK courses and qualifications are recognised and respected by independent agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS), and further afield by industry and employers worldwide. Over 60,000 people have taken one of our qualifications through our network of training providers.

Our courses and qualifications are overseen by a team of highly experienced professionals, who are dedicated to developing the competence and career opportunities for the many thousands of people that play a key role in protecting worker health; in diverse fields such as asbestos, legionella and control technologies.

Information about all our courses and qualifications is available on our website:
www.bohs.org/qualifications-training/bohs-qualifications/

Section 2

RP404 Refresher at a glance

What is the objective?

To revise and update the candidate's knowledge of air sampling and clearance testing techniques, including the provisions for certification for reoccupation.

Who is it for?

Anyone who undertakes clearance testing as part of their work, including air sampling, fibre counting and issuing certificates of reoccupation (e.g. asbestos analysts).

What are the entry requirements?

Candidates must hold one of the following qualifications:

- *P404 Air Sampling of Asbestos and MMMF and Requirements for a Certificate of Reoccupation following Clearance of Asbestos;*
- *Certificate of Competence in Asbestos (CoCA);*
- *Certified Competent Person in Asbestos (CCP).*

What are the main subject areas?

- Health effects and the current regulations
- Method statement/plan of work requirements
- Four stage clearance procedure
- PPE/RPE requirements
- Air sampling methods for asbestos
- Counting requirements

How long does it take?

Normally one day.

What level is it?

Level 4 in the BOHS qualifications framework.

How do candidates pass it?

Candidates must pass a 60 minute written examination within 12 months.

Who supports it?

HSE and UKAS.

Section 3

Background to the course

BOHS has provided asbestos proficiency qualifications in the UK for over 15 years, working closely with globally recognised bodies such as the HSE to set educational standards and to spread best practice. In that time, over 45,000 candidates have taken a BOHS asbestos examination.

RP404 Air Sampling of Asbestos and MMMF and Requirements for a Certificate of Reoccupation Following Clearance of Asbestos is the industry standard qualification for those whose work involves air sampling and clearance testing, such as asbestos analysts. In addition to holding the qualification, they are required to undertake and provide evidence of annual refresher training.

RP404 Refresher is a new course, specifically designed to meet this requirement. It complies with legislation outlined in the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2012, which states that workers who undertake non-licensed asbestos work should have annual refresher training. HSE classes asbestos analysts and surveyors as non-licensed workers. The requirement for yearly refresher training is also supported by HSE guidance documents *HSG264 Asbestos: the survey guide* and *HSG248 Asbestos: the analysts' guide for sampling, analysis and clearance procedures*; along with UKAS publication *LAB 30*.

RP404 Refresher enables candidates to revise and update their knowledge on air sampling and clearance testing techniques, and to receive a certificate of course completion by passing a written examination, which covers both the theory and practice of air sampling and clearance testing.

Section 4

Key features of the course

Objective

The RP404 Refresher is designed to revise asbestos sampling techniques and clearance procedures, to a standard which is recognised as preventing ill health by minimising the risk of exposure to asbestos in buildings.

Target audience

The course is suitable for anyone who:

- Undertakes clearance testing, air sampling and fibre counting as part of their work;
- Issues certificates of reoccupation after asbestos clearance procedures.

Entry requirements

Candidates must hold one of the following qualifications:

- *P404 - Air Sampling of Asbestos and MMMF and Requirements for a Certificate of Reoccupation Following Clearance of Asbestos;*
- *Certificate of Competence in Asbestos (CoCA);*
- *Certified Competent Person in Asbestos (CCP).*

It is expected that candidates will be practising asbestos analysts, or have recent practice in air sampling and clearance testing (within the last three years).

Age range

There is no age restriction on candidates taking the course, but there is a minimum age for working in the asbestos industry.

Level

The level of a course or qualification indicates the relative complexity and depth of knowledge and skills required to attain it.

This course is set at Level 4 in the BOHS qualifications framework.

Fees

The examination fee for each candidate is published on the BOHS website.

Section 5

Delivering the course

Teaching and learning time

The RP404 Refresher course normally runs over one day and includes at least six hours of teaching.

The course can be delivered more flexibly, such as an evening or part day course, but should still include six hours of teaching.

Tutors

The course should be taught by tutors who are experienced and qualified asbestos practitioners. As a guide, tutors will typically have:

- At least three years' experience in asbestos air sampling and clearance testing;
- A recognised asbestos qualification or a professional occupational hygiene qualification.

Teaching resources

Training providers must have the following facilities and equipment:

- Photographic examples for education purposes

Section 6

Syllabus

The course is structured into six sections, each with an indicative time allocation:

Section		Time Allocation
1	Health effects and the current regulations	15%
2	Method statement/plan of work requirements	20%
3	Four stage clearance procedure	25%
4	PPE/RPE requirements	10%
5	Air sampling methods for asbestos	20%
6	Counting requirements	10%

Educational objectives

Candidates understand the principles and requirements for air sampling and clearance testing techniques.

The numbers in brackets refer to the publications listed in 'References and further reading' in Section 7.

1 Health effects and the current regulations (15%)

- 1.0.1 Revise the full range of health effects of asbestos, ranging from benign (pleural plaques) to terminal (mesothelioma) in the light of results from epidemiological studies carried out on asbestos workers.
- 1.0.2 Revise all the relevant HSE regulations for asbestos removal and licensing with reference to the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, outlining the duties of the asbestos removal contractor, employer, owner and the laboratory.
- 1.0.3 Revise all up-to-date relevant HSE guidance. Review control limits, the clearance indicator and certificate of reoccupation for asbestos.

2 Method statement/plan of work requirements (20%)

- 2.0.1 Revise the importance of the role of the method statement/plan of work, and the use of control measures to reduce airborne asbestos emissions and limit the spread of debris.
- 2.0.2 Revise the design, construction, testing and maintenance of enclosures and negative air management systems.
- 2.0.3 Review the role and use of personal protective equipment, transit and hygiene facilities.

- 2.0.4 Review the importance of cleaning the area and the safe removal and disposal of debris.
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3 Four stage clearance procedure (25%)

3.1 Stage One

- 3.1.1 Revise the requirements for the first stage of reoccupation, its certification and the requirements of the method statement. This includes work areas, enclosures, hygiene facilities, transit routes and waste disposal.
- 3.1.2 Revise the needs and methods for enclosure inspection to detect any deficiencies, including smoke testing, leak testing, enclosure design etc. The evaluation of the enclosure must include the decontamination unit and any other equipment normally involved.

3.2 Stage Two

- 3.2.1 Revise clearance inspections of enclosures and decontamination units. Review where asbestos may be found after contractors have completed stripping operations.
- 3.2.2 Review clearance sampling and the meaning of 'thoroughly visually clean'. Discuss how this is assessed.

3.3 Stage Three

- 3.3.1 Review the clearance indicator threshold and the role of clearance sampling. Revise their significance and application to measurements.
- 3.3.2 Review the requirements imposed by ISO 17025 accreditation (8), HSE and UKAS in ensuring that certification is carried out with integrity.
- 3.3.3 Review the areas of potential conflict of interest and what to do if undue pressure or threats are made.

3.4 Stage Four

- 3.4.1 Discuss areas for inspection outside the enclosure and the overall removal of ACMs, in compliance with the method statement.
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4 PPE/RPE requirements (10%)

- 4.0.1 Revise the selection and use of PPE and RPE, its place in the control hierarchy and the likely protection it affords. Review the needs and requirements for face-fit testing.
- 4.0.2 Review transit and decontamination procedures that may need to be followed.
-

5 Air sampling methods for asbestos (20%)

- 5.0.1 Revise the methods for personal and static sampling.
- 5.0.2 Revise the numbers and location of samplers.
- 5.0.3 Review the normal sampling strategies utilised for asbestos assessments.

6 Counting requirements (10%)

- 6.0.1 Revise the preparation of filters and counting of fibres in accordance with the recognised counting rules and the WHO method (as specified in HSG248).
- 6.0.2 Review the limitations of the methods, together with examination of accuracy, precision and systematic differences.

Section 7

References and further reading

- (1) HSG210 (2012), Asbestos Essentials, HSE
- (2) HSG227 (2002), A comprehensive guide to managing asbestos in premises, HSE
- (3) HSG247 (2006), Asbestos: The licensed contractors' guide, HSE
- (4) HSG248 (2005), Asbestos: The analysts guide for sampling, analysis and clearance procedures, HSE
- (5) HSG264 (2012), Asbestos: the survey guide, HSE
- (6) HSG53 (2013), Respiratory protective equipment at work: a practical guide, HSE
- (7) INDG223 (rev 5) (2012), Managing asbestos in buildings: A brief guide, HSE (L143)
- (8) ISO/IEC 17025 (2005), General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories
- (9) L143 (2013), Managing and working with asbestos. Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012. Approved Code of Practice and guidance, HSE
- (10) Thomas Telford DETR, (1999), Asbestos and man-made mineral fibres in buildings: Practical Guidance

HSE guidance is reviewed and revised periodically. Training providers should check that the publications listed above are the current versions.

Useful websites

All the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) publications listed above are available as free downloads from the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk/

Section 8

Completing the course

Candidates are required to pass one written examination in order to complete the course.

Written examination

The written examination usually takes place at the end of the course. It enables candidates to demonstrate that they have retained and kept up-to-date with the breadth and depth of knowledge which necessarily underpins good asbestos sampling practice.

The examination comprises around 20 questions, to be answered in 60 minutes. The questions are similar in format to those used for the P404 examinations, including both written theory and written practical questions. The questions do not require candidates to write large quantities of text and many can be answered as bullet points. Some questions are based on photographs.

The questions are worth different numbers of marks, up to a maximum of 10 marks per question. The number of marks is clearly shown after each question to help candidates understand the expected length of a full answer to the question. Candidates may be awarded between 0 marks up to the maximum number of 10 marks per question.

Candidates should attempt all questions as no marks are deducted for incorrect answers.

The examination covers sections 1 to 6 of the syllabus content, in proportion to the time allocation given for each section. This gives a mark allocation as follows:

Section		Number of marks (% of syllabus)
1	Health effects and the current regulations	11 (15%)
2	Method statement/plan of work requirements	15 (20%)
3	Four stage clearance procedure	18 (25%)
4	PPE/RPE requirements	8 (10%)
5	Air sampling methods for asbestos	15 (20%)
6	Counting requirements	8 (10%)

The sections are clearly marked in the examination paper.

The examination is a closed-book examination, which means that candidates are not permitted to have access to any materials.

Invigilation

The examination is invigilated by the training provider.

Marking and results

All examination papers are marked by BOHS. The pass mark is 60%.

Borderline fail results are automatically re-marked by a second marker.

Candidates receive their results in writing from BOHS. The results are reported as pass or fail plus a percentage.

Training providers are sent a list of results for all candidates on a course.

Feedback

Candidates receive feedback on their examination performance. For example, the feedback for an examination in which a candidate scored 65% would be shown as follows:

Syllabus Area		Result	
1	Health effects and the current regulations	11/11	(100%)
2	Method statement/plan of work requirements	10/15	(66%)
3	Four stage clearance procedure	9/18	(50%)
4	PPE/RPE requirements	6/8	(75%)
5	Air sampling methods for asbestos	5/15	(33%)
6	Counting requirements	8/8	(100%)
Total		49/75	65%

Training providers receive feedback on the performance of all candidates.

Written Exam Performance against syllabus		Number of candidates in each scoring band		
		0-59%	60-75%	76-100%
RP404 Written Exam	1: Health effects and the current regulations	1	6	1
RP404 Written Exam	2: Method statement/plan of work requirements	2	5	1
RP404 Written Exam	3: Four stage clearance procedure	2	6	0
RP404 Written Exam	4: PPE/RPE requirements	1	5	2
RP404 Written Exam	5: Air sampling methods for asbestos	1	5	2
RP404 Written Exam	6: Counting requirements	1	5	2

Resits

Candidates may re-sit the examination, but must pass within 12 months of the original sitting.

Certification

Candidates who pass the course will receive a certificate of successful course completion.

Section 9

Quality assurance

Internal quality assurance

Training providers must operate an internal quality assurance system which evaluates and improves the delivery of the course.

External quality assurance

BOHS undertakes desk-based reviews of documents, including teaching materials, and conducts surveys of candidates. We may also inspect training providers.

This course is not included in the mandatory asbestos training provider inspection scheme.

Section 10

Offering the course

Approved training providers

Training providers that are approved to offer P404 will be automatically approved to offer the RP404 Refresher.

Other approved training providers should complete and return the 'Application to Offer Additional Qualifications' form to qualifications@bohs.org. The form is available on the BOHS website.

Training providers must be approved to offer the P404 qualification in order to be approved to offer the RP404 Refresher.

New training providers

Please send an email to qualifications@bohs.org expressing your interest in offering the course, and we will advise you about the approvals process. Training providers must be approved to offer the P404 qualification in order to be approved to offer the RP404 Refresher.

Section 11

Other courses and qualifications for asbestos practitioners

BOHS offers a wide range of asbestos courses and qualifications for surveyors, analysts, building managers, duty holders and anyone looking to start a career in the asbestos industry.

Proficiency qualifications

Analysts:

- [P401 - Identification of Asbestos in Bulk Samples \(PLM\)](#)
- [P403 - Asbestos Fibre Counting \(PCM\)](#)

Surveyors:

- [P402 - Surveying and Sampling Strategies for Asbestos in Buildings](#)
- [P402RPT - Report Writing for Asbestos Surveys](#)

Duty holders and building managers:

- [P405 - Management of Asbestos in Buildings](#)
- [P407 - Managing Asbestos in Premises - The Duty Holder Requirements](#)

Advanced qualifications

- [CoCA - Certificate of Competence in Asbestos](#)

The CoCA is for candidates who wish to officially establish their competence in the field of asbestos. Candidates would need to hold qualifications in P401, P402, P403, P404 and P405 to apply.

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Information in this course specification is correct at the time of issue but may be subject to change.

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