

Language Competence Test for Construction Workers Level C1 Voc

Reading 1

Read the 5 regulations.

After each regulation there is a statement about it. Say if the statement is right or wrong by ticking the correct box.

Example:

The permit is non-transferable and non-refundable.

Statement: *If you don't use the permit you can get the money back that you paid for it.*

Right

Wrong

1. 'The Authority is unable to issue permits to unlicensed contractors.'

Statement: Any contractor who wants one can obtain a permit.

Right

Wrong

2. 'The Authority has a general duty to enforce the building regulations in its area and will seek to do so by informal means wherever possible.'

Statement: The Authority will take immediate legal action to enforce the building regulations.

Right

Wrong

3. 'An enforcement notice cannot be served on you after the expiration of 12 months from the date of completion of the building work.'

Statement: After a year it is not possible to serve you with an enforcement notice.

Right

Wrong

4. Anyone can apply for planning permission, irrespective of who owns the land or buildings concerned. However, if you do not own the land, you have to inform the owner of your intention.

Statement: The land owner is not the only person who can make an application for planning permission.

Right

Wrong

5. The Competent Person Scheme allows individuals and enterprises to self-certify that their work complies with the Building Regulations as an alternative to using an approved inspector.

Statement: Only approved inspectors can certify that work complies with regulations.

Right

Wrong

Reading 2

Read the 5 sentences and say what kind of documents they come from by choosing from a, b and c. Underline the correct answer.

Example: You must have good manual dexterity and the ability to work quickly and accurately in addition to following set-up procedures.

a. Job description

b. Legal document

c. Business letter

1. 'Coiled welding cable should ideally be spread out before use. This avoids serious overheating and damage to insulation.'

a. Manual

b. Regulations

c. Business letter

2. 'I affirm that I am familiar with the prerequisites of Section 54.1 of the code and I am neither a contractor nor subcontractor.'

a. Employment contract

b. Legal declaration

c. Building regulation

3. 'Thank you for remaining one of our valued customers. We appreciate your co-operation in this matter.'

- a. Promotional leaflet
- b. Notification of legal action
- c. Business letter

4. 'Employers shall inform employees, in comprehensible form and language, about the protective measures taken on their behalf.'

- a. Health and safety rules
- b. Job description
- c. Notice to work force

5. 'The drill will penetrate shale, soft slate, cemented gravel and weathered decomposed bedrock, but is not suitable for drilling in hard rock.'

- a. Health and Safety rules
- b. Employment contract
- c. Technical specifications

Reading 3

Study the extract from a report and answer the questions.

Purpose of report

To present the results of a Geotechnical Site Assessment for a proposed construction on NW side of Avenue de la Victoire, Paris.

Scope of assessment

- a. Subsurface investigation
- b. Lab testing of soils
- c. Geotechnical engineering analysis

Project description

- a. Warehouse of approximately 6000 m²
- b. Loading dock 465m² as shown on the Site Plan in Appendix B.

Site Description

Location: an industrial zoned area (currently derelict)

Topography: fairly flat

Drainage: to the south at a slight to moderate fall

Subsurface Investigation

Number of borings: 9

Type of borings: standard penetration tests

Date of borings: 2/6/09

Location of borings: B1, B2, B3, B4 within site of proposed warehouse
B5, B6, B8, B9 in proposed loading dock

1. What two things are going to be built?
2. Where will you find a diagram of the proposed construction?
3. What is the location of the building project?
4. What does the site look like now?
5. How is the subsurface investigation done?

Reading 4

Complete the report by filling the gaps with the phrases provided.

Write the letter of each missing phrase in the right gap. There is one phrase you do not need.

The first is done as an example.

- a. the concrete floor below
- b. expedient production
- c. a three-storey dwelling
- d. fall prevention systems
- e. the stairwell opening
- f. supervisors and workers
- g. a drop of 7 meters

Summary

A carpenter working on the third level of 1. *a three storey dwelling* fell seven metres onto a concrete surface and died from injuries sustained.

Details

The deceased is David Nowak. At the time of the accident, Mr Nowak was working beside

2. _____ which had no guardrail. The stair openings for the second and third levels were vertically aligned and the stairway had not yet been constructed. This meant there was 3. _____ from the third level to the first-level basement concrete floor.

Mr Nowak fell through the successive openings to 4. _____.

Findings

The construction company's culture of 5. _____ led to employees ignoring fundamental safe working practices and supervision of employees did not include ensuring that

6. _____ were in place and that workers followed safe work procedures. No inspection of hazards had been done by the contractor.

Listening 1

You will hear five sentences. Underline the best *response* to each sentence from a, b and c.

Example: You hear, 'The licence is about to expire.'

You read:

- a. *Will the licence expire soon?*
- b. *We need to renew it.*
- c. *It's a new licence.*

The best response is b. Underline option b.

1.
 - a. They are outlined in the contract.
 - b. They promised to carry out all the services.
 - c. Yes, we have made a promise to the contractor
2.
 - a. I will test it for anomalies.
 - b. I agree, it is too strong.
 - c. I will target the strength levels.
3.
 - a. Here are the plumbing plans.
 - b. Obviously there is too much detail.
 - c. OK, I will add drains, vents and clean-outs.
4.
 - a. We have the money, you can go ahead.
 - b. OK, put on a standard shingle roof.
 - c. Changing the roof may be expensive.
5.
 - a. We should complain.
 - b. But we can't increase the pay.
 - c. Let's talk to him.

Audio script

1. The contractor must carry out all the services that have been promised.
2. This sample does not meet targeted strength levels.
3. The plumbing plans are not detailed enough.
4. It may be expensive to change from a standard shingle roof.
5. The union rep is complaining about working conditions.

Listening 2

Listen to the telephone conversation and complete the record of the call.

Record of telephone call

Insulation specifications (1) _____

Fire door ratings (2) _____

Fire door material (3) _____

Pipes for sprinkler system (4) _____

Sprinkler heads (5) _____

Audio script

Steve: Pete, I've just received the plans but there are one or two things missing from them.

Pete: OK Steve. What do you need to know?

Steve: First off, er... R values for the insulation.

Pete: I've got it here, let's see... Insulation...yes: R- two.

Steve: Good. And the fire doors, I need a fire rating.

Pete: OK. Specs are: half hour fire-check. So the doors must be FD thirties: got that?
Made of gypsum: OK? Not metal ones. Please don't get that wrong – not after last time. Anything else?

Steve: The automatic sprinkler system?

Pete: Ah yes: wet system, copper pipe work with concealed sprinkler heads.

Steve: Great, thanks, that's all for now.

Listening 3

Listen to the description of a church and answer the questions.

1. What shape is the church?
2. When was the building constructed?
3. What colour is the building?
4. How many doors are in the entrance?
5. Where is the staircase located?

Audio script

This rectangular building was built in the middle of the nineteenth century. It faces north and around it, on all sides, there is open land. It is two stories high with a stone foundation and a metal roof.

The brick veneer has, at some time, been painted red. The central entrance has two concrete steps leading to a double door. Tall, narrow, stained-glass windows extend through the two stories but there are no windows on the north side of the church. A small brick chimney is located on the west side of the roof.

The entrance hall is small. There are wood panelled doors in the entrance hall which lead to other rooms and a wooden staircase that goes to the first floor.

Listening 4

Listen to the dialogue and answer the questions by underlining the correct answers from a, b and c.

1. What is Mr Defrayne's query?
 - a. Does he have the latest blueprints?
 - b. What should he do with the fibreglass?
 - c. Where is the old blueprint?

2. What are the R-values of the fibreglass Mr Defrayne has?
 - a. 2.5
 - b. 2.7
 - c. 3.5

3. What happened on the 11th March?
 - a. Mr Defrayne was sent the blueprint.
 - b. The blue print was modified.
 - c. Fibreglass was delivered to Mr Defrayne.

4. How many times has the blueprint been revised?
 - a. At least twice
 - b. Once
 - c. Never

5. Who sent the wrong blueprint?
 - a. Mr Defrayne
 - b. Sabatina
 - c. Tina

Audio script

- Mr. Defrayne:** Hello Tina.
- Tina:** Good morning Mister DeFrayne, what can I do for you?
- Mr. Defrayne:** It's about the revisions you sent over.
- Tina:** Yes?
- Mr. Defrayne:** Well, according to the revised blueprint, the R-value of the fibreglass should be two point five, no, hang on: two point seven. Now, I remember we decided that it would be three point five so if I'm wrong, we've got a lot of material we won't be able to use.
- Tina:** What's the modification date on the plans you've got? Have you brought them with you?
- Mr. Defrayne:** Right here, Tina. Let's have a look. Here it is, last modification: eleventh of March.
- Tina:** I don't think that the eleventh was the most recent modification. Let me check my records.....Yes, you've been sent the wrong one. The latest revision was on the fifteenth of March. Sorry Mister Defrayne. Don't blame me though, I think Sabatina is the culprit – I was off last week and she was standing in for me.
- Mr Defrayne:** Well, at least I've got the right material. For a moment there, you had me worried. [fade out]

Speaking 1

Examiner's copy

1. Do you think that work experience is more useful than formal training?
2. Who is better to work for: large construction companies or small local builders? Why?
3. Should we preserve ugly buildings?
4. What is the state of health of the construction industry in your country?
5. What do you know about green methods of building?
6. What is your favourite building? Describe it.
7. How can cowboy builders be discouraged?
8. Do you think it is a good idea for house owners to get involved in their own building projects – or should they leave it to the professionals?
9. What buildings would you like to demolish and why?
10. 'Architects love images, not people': discuss.

Speaking 2

Candidate's copy

Read the following and prepare a presentation on the subject of: 'Why bad design is bad for people'.

In the world of contemporary architecture, there is a conflict between the desire to be 'good' and the desire to be 'innovative'. As a result, what the critics think about buildings is often in opposition to what the people who work or live in them think.

A courthouse designed by American architect Richard Meir has won several awards and architectural students all around the world study it as a model. It is considered to be a magnificent building, filled with light where important human matters are discussed. However, people who work in the building have criticised it for being stark, intimidating and fascistic. One said, 'it reminds me of a nightmare in which the dreamer runs furiously and gets nowhere.'

The building is the architect's way of saying, 'look what I have done, aren't I clever? It is a homage to the architect's ego.'

Writing 2

Write approximately 250 words on one of the following:

1. You are having problems with you material supplier. Several deliveries have arrived late, and this has caused problems. The supplier is cheaper than the others you have used and the material is good quality, but you are worried that in the future there will be problems. Write a letter expressing your concern.

2. You are managing a construction project that has been going on for two years (it was supposed to end last month). Expenditure has risen over the past two years, so have costs including materials and wages. The company accountant is very concerned and wants you to report on why the job is taking so long and why it is costing so much. Write a short report under the following headings:
 - a. Expenditure
 - b. Costs
 - c. Delays

3. Under the title, ‘A high point and a low point in my career’, write about a job that, when completed, gave you a satisfaction and about another job that, when completed, gave you a feeling of dissatisfaction.

Answer key

Reading 1

1. wrong
2. wrong
3. right
4. right
5. wrong

Reading 2

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. a
5. c

Reading 3

1. warehouse and loading dock
2. Appendix B
3. NW side of Avenue de la Victoire, Paris
4. derelict industrial zone
5. borings

Reading 4

2. e
3. g
4. a
5. b
6. d

Listening 1

1. a
2. a
3. c
4. a
5. c

Listening 2

1. R-2
2. FD 30
3. gypsum
4. copper
5. concealed

Listening 3

1. rectangle
2. middle 19th century
3. red
4. 2
5. in the entrance hall

Listening 4

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. a
5. b