

## VIDEO 'AIDS 18TH EDITION COMPLIANCE'

The pressure's mounting on electricians and contractors as the launch date for the 18th Edition of the Wiring Regs looms large



Once 'The Blue Book' is introduced on 1 July, the clock starts ticking down the six-month 'grace' period to 1 January 2019 for them to become compliant in the install regulations. All work undertaken after that date has to comply with the new requirements.

It is reported that awarding bodies, such as City & Guilds and EAL, will be offering only one 60-question, two-hour multiple choice examination to test the entire 18th edition (BS 7671: 2018), rather than a shorter assessment for just the new additions – a decision some in the sector are criticising, bearing in mind the vast bulk of the regulations, which cover domestic to industrial installations, is 17th edition content.

What's more while some learners may know their onions, and decide to do an update course in, say a day, it's general thought they won't have sufficient time to become familiar with the layout of the new book, as new content will have been added and other content moved. So, this could slow them down in the exam even if they needed to look something up.

If you never felt more like singing the blues at the prospect of such an all-embracing test of so wide a body of knowledge, despair not.

A suite of video training and elearning that targets the 18th Edition is nearing launch to help electricians and contractors prepare for compliance. LearningLounge.com/Channel 18 has been set up specifically to offer training in the run-up to the deadline.

Launching this month, Channel 18 will initially provide news updates and competitions as well as some great special offers and discounts to make training to the 18th Edition as cost effective as possible. After the book is published in July, Navigator Productions will launch courses including bite sized training videos. These will feature professional, fully-qualified technical presenters and are filmed across many sites to create engaging content and an environment more conducive to learning.

"The challenges are stern", notes electrical safety expert and Channel 18 presenter Gary Gundry, (pictured left with Dave Austin (right)) who is involved in proofing the 18th Edition. "If you are a pilot and you have a wobbly landing, you and your passengers still live to tell the tale. But electricians have to get it absolutely right every day." The multiple-choice exam is a fast-track route to compliance. "Within minutes you know if you have passed," he adds.

"The regulations are really comprehensive – big, broad and involved and hard to grasp for many," he continues. "That's why we have tried to ease the learning process by videoing as many locations as possible."

In the last 10 years since the 17th Edition appeared, it is believed that some 200,000 people have been tested to gain certification, Gundry continues. "Probably 80 to 90% of the 17th Edition is going to be included in the 18th with many pages carrying some changes and/or tweaks."

Safety is one of the most important aspects of the edition to portray effectively in training, Gundry says. "New regulations about fixing cables in all locations – not just escape routes – to prevent premature collapse, surge protection devices and arc fault detection devices all figure in this edition, as does the wider use of RCDs."

The course content can be accessed linearly or randomly by fixed and mobile devices. "Now that technology like 4G has come of age, it's all about learning on the go, although our blended approach allows access to tutors in the classroom as well," Gary explains.

"Video is a good way to absorb the content of the 18th Edition in the six-month grace period available. It's about distilling technical content into an engaging learning format. It also helps people to learn at a pace that suits and should they wish to visit a phrase, formula or whole section again, that's possible too. Plus, by filming on site, we're able to take people to an electrical installation that they may never visit in their lives."

The 30-second to 3-minute long videos assume some knowledge of electrical principles, Gundry stresses, adding that pre-assessment advice will be available to determine if would-be applicants need to "brush up" before moving on to the course programme. Refreshers will be available if they do.

"We've tried to deliver training that's written to communicate with the individual and designed to encourage deeper knowledge," stresses production director Terry Brown, "particularly concerning some sections, such as Chapter 41 – Protection against Electric Shock, which require the ability to not only interpret what a regulation means, but also apply it with an understanding of essential electrical principles".

Chapter 41 will have some 14 different video components, he adds, among "100s of mini modules" across the full course programme, which addresses the seven parts and 17 appendices of the new edition.

A three-minute promotional video is available to view at <http://www.learninglounge.com/channel18> while monthly competitions will be rolled out in March through to July.

It's not just about passing a two-hour, multiple-choice exam though, Gundry insists but about encouraging a deeper understanding of your subject. "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for life."

