



CIEEM



Membership Application Guidance

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1. Who can Apply?

Our membership is open to all those who manage, enhance, protect or have an interest in the natural environment. It reflects the depth of the profession, ranging from students and apprentices embarking on a career in the sector, to directors, senior advisers and policy-makers. While our members are drawn from a range of backgrounds, the common thread tying them together is a level of professional competence that we are proud to promote and support.

We offer a range of membership grades and the most suitable one for you is determined by your background, competence and professional experience. This guidance document, along with the application form, will guide you through the application and assessment process. We recommend that, before you start working on an application, you read through this document to familiarise yourself with the application process and its requirements.

2. Which level of membership should I apply for?

Our Competency Framework identifies the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected of those working in the profession, grouping them into four levels of increasing professional competence: Basic, Capable, Accomplished and Authoritative. Our membership grades reflect our members' skills, experience and professional competence and recognise that, as your career develops, so too will your relationship with us.

All applications for Full and Associate membership are reviewed by volunteer assessors who work under the guidance of our Membership Admissions Committee (MAC). The assessors will be looking for you to demonstrate evidence of the required number of competencies at the appropriate competence level.

3. Self-Assessment

We strongly recommend that you initially complete a self-assessment of your competence level against all of the competencies that are relevant to you to identify your key strengths. Our self-assessment tool has been designed and built to offer as much flexibility as possible. You can choose to assess yourself against a single competency, a suite of competencies that fall under an overarching theme, or the entire Framework of 40 competencies. You can also decide your 'starting' level of competence to speed up the process. The tool will take you through a series of questions that have simple 'yes/no' responses. Although the tool only requires a 'yes/no' response, in order to answer the questions with confidence you will often need to think about specific examples of when you actually carried out this activity. It would be a good idea to make a note of these projects so that you can draw upon them in your written evidence. Do remember that the tool's output is just a guide. Answering 'yes' to a sufficient number of questions does not in itself demonstrate your competence, but the tool can give you an indication or confirmation that you are likely to be working at a particular level in specific areas and that you should be able to evidence this.

Competence	Definition	How this relates to membership
Authoritative	Is widely recognised as an authority, both by others within the organisation and/or by external peers, for the knowledge and experience they demonstrate in some or all of the activities covered by this competence.	Full members, Fellows, and Chartered Ecologists may evidence one or more competencies at this level.
Accomplished	Has the knowledge and experience of this activity to carry out complex, specialist or non-standard tasks confidently and consistently. Is aware of alternative options and approaches and can provide guidance, instruction and advice on this activity to others.	Full members, Fellows, and Chartered Ecologists would be expected to be able to evidence relevant competencies at this level.
Capable	Has the knowledge and experience essential to carry out standard tasks unsupervised confidently and consistently well. Is likely to need to seek advice before carrying out complex or non-standard tasks.	Associate members would be expected to be able to evidence relevant competencies at this level.
Basic	Has some knowledge with an understanding of terminology and concepts. Has some experience of practical application. Would be able to carry out standard tasks to the required standard under supervision.	Qualifying members are likely to be able to evidence relevant competencies at this level.

You can find links to the Competency Framework, self-assessment tool and supporting information on the 'Applying for Membership' pages of our website.

It is important that you take time to read the descriptions of what each theme and competency covers before completing your self-assessment. When you go on to complete the membership application form, you will need to provide convincing written evidence of your chosen areas of competence, so choose the ones that you feel most confident in.

The relevant application process information for Student and Qualifying applicants is provided on our website. Applicants for Associate and Full membership should continue to read on to find more detailed information about the competence-based application process.

4. How do I apply?

In order to apply for membership an applicant must be able to meet the criteria set out in the table overleaf. Meeting these criteria does not guarantee admission.

4.1. Prepare your written application

The Competency Framework is divided into two main sections:

- Technical Competencies - Relating specifically to the application of ecological and environmental knowledge and understanding.
- Transferable Competencies - Professional competencies that can be carried over from one activity or role to another.

All applicants must be able to demonstrate understanding of the ethical dilemmas that an ecologist or environmental manager may encounter, how to conduct oneself to avoid behaving inappropriately and how to help those less experienced. This is a core characteristic of our membership and therefore the Professional Conduct competency is mandatory for all competence-assessed membership grades. See the 'Summary of Competence' section on page seven for more details.

For competence assessed grades, as well as evidencing your level of competence using the Competency Framework, it is important that you take the opportunity to give the assessors an overview of your career and achievements to date. The assessors can only reach a decision on your application based on all the information you provide, so if you refer to a specific role, project or qualification in your evidence of competence, make sure you provide sufficient detail. For example:

- If you are undertaking work which would typically require a protected species licence, then your evidence must make it clear that you hold the relevant licence.
- If your evidence refers to work completed in a specific role, ensure you provide details of that role within the 'Previous Relevant Experience' section of the form.
- If you were given another contract or project as a result of your good work in the example chosen to illustrate your competency, then say this yourself as it is evidence of your competence.
- If you studied something relevant to your chosen competency and were assessed by an exam or piece of coursework, give the mark you achieved as evidence of your competence.

Membership Grade	Eligibility Criteria
Fellow	Fellowship is the highest level of CIEEM membership and is reserved for those who are deemed to have made an outstanding contribution to the profession. Information and guidance about becoming a Fellow can be found on our website.
Full	You are currently engaged in or actively seeking professional practice in ecology or ecological management of the natural environment and are able to demonstrate competence at an Accomplished level.
Associate	You are currently engaged in or actively seeking professional practice in ecology or ecological management of the natural environment and are able to demonstrate competence at a Capable level.
Qualifying	You are in the early stages of your career and may or may not have completed post-18 academic studies. Applicants will typically be building their competence at the Basic level and need to use the Competency Framework to identify the skills they wish to develop as they work towards a competence-assessed membership grade (e.g. Associate).
Student	You are studying a full-time or part-time course leading to an examined degree, HND, Foundation degree or equivalent qualification in any subject.

You can find application forms, short instructional videos and other useful guidance material on the Membership pages of our website. Existing members applying to upgrade their membership should head to the 'Upgrade Your Membership' pages in the My CIEEM area of our website for more information.

We strongly recommend you discuss your application with the sponsors you have in mind to support you. This gives you the opportunity to talk through suitable examples and projects you may have worked on together. Getting your sponsors engaged at an early stage will help ensure you have their full support for the evidence you intend to supply. It is up to you to present the necessary evidence to our assessors so that they can clearly see you have reached and are working at the level of competence you are claiming. Your sponsors need to be endorsing the evidence you have provided, and any evidence supplied by them which has not been mentioned by you in your statement is likely to be discounted. Do make sure you use the word count available to you to get across all the evidence you need to and do not rely on your sponsors to fill in any gaps. At higher grades of membership less weight will be applied to sponsor statements, so if you are applying for Full membership you will need to ensure your evidence is strong and meets the competency descriptors adequately.

You should also take time to consider the impression that the overall standard of your application gives. We encourage you to take the time to read your application again to satisfy yourself that it represents you well. You may wish to complete a draft of your form on a separate document so that you can use tools such as spellcheck and track changes. Incomplete or incorrectly completed application forms will be returned to you and will delay the assessment process. Please help yourself by taking the time to get it right first time.

It is very important that the information that you give is accurate and can be verified. Successful applicants who are later found to have deliberately fraudulently completed the application form will be referred to the Professional Standards Committee for a breach of our Code of Professional Conduct.

Personal details

In this section you need to provide your current contact information, including your preferred contact details.

Summary of higher education post-18

This section relates to taught courses leading to a regulated qualification, for example, all degree courses, foundation degrees, Higher National Diplomas, Higher National Certificates and Baccalaureates or their equivalents gained outside the UK. The assessors will use this information to further understand your educational qualifications and how these have been applied in your professional practice.

Other qualifications

This is an opportunity to further complete the picture of your background and experience. Use this section to list relevant, nationally-recognised qualifications, including diplomas and certificates resulting from examination or assessment that do not fit the criteria in the previous section.

Research and publications record

Please summarise any research or publications you have been involved with, or make reference to and attach a CV containing this information.

Membership of professional bodies and learned societies

This is part of the supplementary information that allows the assessors to better understand your current professional standing. You should only list those bodies and societies that are relevant to your activities in the ecology or environmental management sector.

Details of professional activity

Current activity

In this section you are asked to provide details of your current role. You might be undertaking paid work or acting in a voluntary capacity, applying your ecological and environmental management knowledge and skills. You are asked to describe concisely the main purpose or scope of your role and give details of some relevant tasks or projects undertaken. The assessors will use this information to understand the professional context in which you are currently operating.

Previous relevant experience

In this section you should provide a summary of all your previous relevant appointments. Professional experience can be paid, unpaid or voluntary.

You should include the month and year of the start and finish of each role. You should include part-time work and indicate the proportion of a full-time position either as a fraction (e.g. 0.5 FTE (Full Time Equivalent)) or number of days per week or month. You may have had paid and voluntary roles that ran concurrently. You should include them all in this section.

Do not leave any unexplained gaps. If there are any gaps, give the start and end dates of the gap, put not applicable (N/A) in the next four columns and then briefly indicate the reason in the final column.

Ensure any previous work experience you may wish to reference within your evidence of competence is listed within this section.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

CPD is the range of learning activities by which professionals maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills throughout their career to ensure that they continue to practise to the highest standards. Undertaking CPD not only supports career development, but is also a responsibility to clients, employers and society. On admission as a member you will be required to maintain a record of CPD undertaken.

If you are new to CIEEM, you should list here all relevant CPD completed in the last three years. For existing members please follow guidance provided on the online CPD tool regarding the submission of your CPD records for the last three subscription years, or since you joined CIEEM if less than three years ago.

The description of CPD activity should outline what type of CPD it was (e.g. training course, coaching, conference, reading, work shadowing), the training provider and the subject matter.

The structured or unstructured column requires an 'S' or a 'US' depending on the nature of the CPD. Structured CPD includes attendance on a training course, at a conference, formal home study and organised 'on-the-job' training. Unstructured CPD includes reading of relevant literature, personal study, research, site visits and committee involvement.

Sponsors

The role of a sponsor is an important one. They play a critical role in upholding the integrity of the standards of membership and making sure that we continue to be a body that you would be proud to be a member of. For most membership grades there is currently no professional review interview as part of the application process. Sponsor statements are therefore an essential part of the assessment and contribute significantly to the success or otherwise of an application.

Sponsors must confirm that the information contained in your application form about your competence and professionalism is correct. To do this they must have sufficient knowledge of the quality of your practice as a professional.

Your sponsors should preferably be members of CIEEM at the same grade that you are applying for or above, and should ideally have known you for at least 12 months. It is vital that all of your competency choices can be endorsed by at least one sponsor.

A guidance document for sponsors is available on the Membership pages of our website. We strongly recommend that you send this, along with the following documents, to your sponsors:

- Your application form.
- CIEEM Membership Regulations
- CIEEM Code of Professional Conduct
- CIEEM Competency Framework

Membership Grade	Sponsors Required	Notes
Full and Associate	Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsors need to confirm, in 100 – 150 words for each of your competency choices, that they know you professionally and/or academically, and that they endorse the information you have provided, including the self-assessment of competencies. • Each of your chosen competencies must be endorsed by at least one sponsor. • Your line manager and/or a close work colleague may act as your sponsor.

If it is not possible to find CIEEM members to act as sponsors, then non-member sponsors may be acceptable. In all cases all sponsors must have knowledge of your work and be able to endorse your competence and integrity as a potential member. All non-member sponsors will need to provide a copy of their CV or work profile to demonstrate their suitability. It will be the applicant's responsibility to request this information from the non-member sponsor and forward it with their application.

Sponsors may be in breach of our Code of Professional Conduct (or that of another professional body of which they are a member) if they knowingly endorse false claims of competence. Please do not put a potential sponsor in a difficult position by asking them to sponsor you when they have insufficient knowledge to do so responsibly.

Please contact our office if you have difficulties in obtaining sponsors, or need further advice.

Summary of competence

This section is where you will need to provide evidence of having a Capable or Accomplished level of competence in the minimum required number of competencies. In order to complete this section you must have read our Competency Framework and understood:

- What we mean by Basic, Capable, Accomplished and Authoritative competence levels
- The difference between technical and transferable competencies
- What the 14 themes and 40 competencies are
- What areas of knowledge and skill each of the competencies typically cover

Professional Conduct is mandatory for all applicants. Professional conduct is about your understanding of what it means to uphold high standards of conduct, what ethical concerns or considerations you come across, or might come across in the course of your role and what measures you take to ensure that your actions are appropriate. You may find it useful to familiarise yourself with our Code of Professional Conduct, which can be found on our website.

If you have completed the self-assessment process, you should have a better idea of which six additional competencies you can most confidently evidence your competence in.

You should then list your chosen competencies, stating whether they are either technical or transferable. For both your mandatory and optional competencies you will need to justify your claims.

Use the STARE method of providing evidence of competence:

- Explain the Situation or Task you were involved in
- Identify the Action you took as an individual, and why
- Explain what the Result was
- Evaluate the outcomes in relation to your competence level. This is essential

Choose a variety of examples of your work and projects to demonstrate that you have the breadth of knowledge required, but focus in on just one or two of these examples per competency. Remember, when talking about projects you have worked on, to provide an indication of size and complexity and explain any acronyms you may use within your evidence if they are not commonly used ones, for example SSSI, EclA. This way you can demonstrate your depth of knowledge and proof of your competence level within the word-count. Please do not provide us with a long list of projects you have worked on, as this does not prove your competence. It may be necessary to make reference to information provided in the 'Details of professional activity' section of the form within your written evidence. Be sure to review the individual competency descriptor in the Competency Framework document for the level of competence you are claiming to ensure the evidence you provide sufficiently addresses what is required.

Your sponsors will be asked to verify the accuracy of the information and you are reminded that falsely claiming competence that you do not have would be a breach of our Code of Professional Conduct.

Some examples of appropriate justifications for claimed levels of competence are available on our website.

Please note that there is a minimum of 100 and a maximum of 250 words per competence. Assessors expect the word limits to be used and applications that fall outside these limits may be returned for editing or rejected.

4.2. Declarations

Sponsors must complete and sign the relevant declaration section on your application form. Scanned or electronic signatures are accepted. If signatures are typed into the form your sponsor will be contacted to confirm that they support your application.

Applicants must sign and date the application declaration which confirms that, should you be admitted as a member, you agree to abide by the terms and conditions of membership as set out in our Member Regulations and Code of Professional Conduct. Both of these documents are available on our website. You are also confirming that the information in the application form is, to the best of your knowledge, correct.

4.3. Submission and payment

Before submitting your application, take time to ensure you have provided all the relevant information requested within the form and all required supporting information. Taking the time to ensure your application is complete on submission will enable the Membership Team to process your application more quickly and efficiently.

You should email your completed application form, together with any attachments, to: membership@cieem.net.

5. What happens next?

1. Your application will be acknowledged by email upon receipt.
2. Your application will be checked to ensure you have provided sufficient information. If anything is missing you will be notified and asked to submit this information.
3. Applications for Full and Associate membership are assessed by senior CIEEM members who volunteer their time. We process a large volume of applications and at the busiest times of year it can take up to three to four months from receipt of application to outcome.

Student and Qualifying applications are processed within four to six weeks of receipt of an application and admitted following assessment by the Membership Team, providing eligibility criteria are met. Please allow sufficient time for your application to be processed if you require membership by a specific date.

4. You will be informed of the outcome of your application by email. There are a number of possible outcomes:
 - Your application is successful and you will be admitted as a member.
 - The assessors require additional information to be supplied in order to reach a final outcome.
 - Your application is unsuccessful and you will be provided with feedback to assist in a future application.
1. You are not allowed to call yourself a member or use any applicable post-nominals/suffix until after your admission has been confirmed in writing. False representation of your status is a breach of our Code of Professional Conduct. You are, however, allowed to tell people that you have applied for a particular grade of membership.

6. What if I don't agree with the outcome?

Applicants must notify the Secretariat within 30 days of their intention to appeal the decision of their membership application. At this point applicants will be provided with a copy of our membership appeals process. Applicants must provide clear and concise grounds for appeal, taking into account all feedback provided during the application process.

The Membership Operations Manager and/or Chief Executive Officer will review the full application and decide if there are grounds for the application to be reviewed.

If there are suitable grounds for appeal the application will be reassessed. The applicant will be required to pay an administration fee which will be refunded if the applicant is admitted at the level at which they originally applied. The outcome of this second review is final and the applicant must either accept the decision of the Committee or withdraw their application. Should the applicant withdraw their application the initial administration fee will be retained.

7. Fees and payments

- All applications are acknowledged by email typically one week of receipt. An application administration fee, if applicable, will be invoiced on receipt of an application and payment required according to the terms stated on the invoice. Administration fees are non-refundable should an application be withdrawn or an outcome not accepted.
- Any charges incurred by us due to cheque payments being declined will be your responsibility.
- Should your application be successful an invoice for either your first year of membership (for new members) or the appropriate upgrade subscription (for current members) will be issued and payment is required according to the terms stated on the invoice. Invoices are generated on a pro-rata basis for all applications to Qualifying membership and above. Please see the following table for more information:

Month application is successful	Proportion of subscription fee due
Oct, Nov, Dec	Full amount
Jan, Feb, Mar	Three quarters full amount
Apr, May, Jun	Half full amount
Jul, Aug, Sept	Quarter full amount

All current application and subscription fees can be found on our website.

We are here to help. If you have any queries regarding the application process or your own application, please do not hesitate to contact the Membership Team:

01962 868626

membership@cieem.net