



# **Chartered Ecologist Regulations: Information and Eligibility**

## The Chartered Ecologist Register

The Register of Chartered Ecologists was established by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) in July 2013 under powers conferred by the granting of a Royal Charter on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. The Register recognises the effective application of knowledge and understanding of the science of ecology by professionals<sup>1</sup> committed to the highest standards of practice.

Chartered Ecologists are active professionals who use their knowledge, experience and influence to promote and advance ecology as an applied discipline. They may work or have worked in local or national government, consultancy, the voluntary sector, statutory agencies, industry or academia but they are united by three common characteristics:

1. their advice and practice is based on a fundamental understanding of ecology and the critical evaluation of scientific evidence;
2. they work in accordance with high standards of professional conduct; and
3. they can communicate complex ecological concepts and ideas confidently and effectively to a wide range of audiences.

As our natural environment faces ever-increasing pressures and threats there are signs that society is starting to recognise and value the vital life support, provisioning, regulation and cultural services it provides. Chartered Ecologists, in the many different guises that they may be found, are at the forefront of work to protect and enhance the natural environment and to safeguard, manage, and restore these services for the benefit of nature and society.

Chartered Ecologists are identified by the post-nominal letters 'CEcol'.

### Management of the Register

The management of the Chartered Ecologist Register is the responsibility of the Governing Board of CIEEM acting in accordance with the provisions of its Royal Charter and Bylaws. The Chartered Ecologist Registration Authority, a sub-committee of the Governing Board, is responsible for overseeing the proper operation of the Register on its behalf.

### Eligibility Criteria

In order to be registered as a Chartered Ecologist an applicant must first meet all of the following criteria:

- Be, or be willing to become, a Full member or Fellow of CIEEM, or be a member of another professional body which has been licensed by CIEEM to put forward candidates.
- Be an 'active' ecologist whether in an employed, self-employed, retired or otherwise voluntary capacity. This can include contributing expertise, being a source of expert advice and guidance, and sharing knowledge.
- Provide evidence of compliance with CIEEM's mandatory minimum Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirement of 30 hours per annum, at least 20 hours of which should be structured CPD<sup>2</sup>. Chartered Ecologist registrants may be asked to supply evidence, through a random auditing process, of continuing to meet this requirement whilst on the Register.
- Provide evidence of continuing compliance with the applicant's professional body's Code of Conduct with no complaints against the applicant upheld in the three-year period leading up to the application. In the case of a complaint against a Chartered Ecologist a properly conducted investigation and disciplinary process will be

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<sup>1</sup> Ecologists, paid or unpaid, active in a professional manner and using their knowledge, experience and understanding to advance ecological understanding and practice.

<sup>2</sup> See separate CIEEM Guidance on CPD, located on the CIEEM website.

implemented by CIEEM in accordance with the Chartered Ecologist Regulations and CIEEM Professional Conduct Inquiry Procedures available from the CIEEM website.

- Provide evidence of meeting the minimum competence requirements as defined by CIEEM’s Competency Framework, a copy of which can be downloaded from the CIEEM website. CIEEM’s Competency Framework comprises 40 competencies, grouped into 14 themes and divided into Technical competencies and Transferable competencies. The Competency Framework recognises four levels of increasing competence: Basic; Capable; Accomplished; and Authoritative. The Chartered Ecologist standard is based upon demonstrating a minimum number of competencies at the Accomplished or Authoritative competence levels as defined below.

Accomplished	Has the knowledge and experience of this activity to carry out complex, specialist or non-standard activities confidently and consistently. Is aware of alternative options and approaches and can provide guidance, instruction and advice to others on this activity.
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 on the activity.

### **Bodies Licensed by CIEEM to put forward applicants for Registration**

The By-laws of the Chartered Institute state that:

*‘Admission to the Register shall be open to Fellows and Full Members and those who are not members of the Chartered Institute but are members of another body licensed according to criteria agreed from time to time by the Governing Board and published in the Regulations.’*

All applicants for registration will be assessed by CIEEM in accordance with the assessment process approved by the Governing Board. The requirements of a body applying to be licensed by CIEEM are that:

- a. there is evidence that the body has members that would be eligible to apply for registration as a Chartered Ecologist;
- b. there is evidence of a minimum annual CPD requirement that is equivalent to, or greater than, CIEEM’s and agreement to supply copies of such records to CIEEM with the applicant’s permission;
- c. there is evidence of a formal disciplinary process for complaints against its members;
- d. there is an agreement to inform CIEEM of any complaint against a CEcol applicant or Registrant so that CIEEM’s Professional Standards Committee can take a view as to whether there is a potential breach of the Chartered Ecologist Code of Conduct and the matter should be dealt with in accordance with CIEEM’s Disciplinary Regulations<sup>3</sup>;
- e. there is an agreement to inform CIEEM of any disciplinary sanctions, failure to undertake CPD or a lapse of membership that would potentially make the CEcol’s continuing registration inappropriate; and
- f. there is payment of a periodic licensing fee (at a rate to be determined by the Governing Board) to cover the costs of assessing the application from a prospective membership body.

Assessment of applications to become a licensed body is the responsibility of the Registration Authority who will make a recommendation to the Governing Board. Approval for the licensing of applicant bodies is the responsibility of the Governing Board.

A membership body licensed by CIEEM to put forward applicants for registration as Chartered Ecologists will need to have its licence reassessed every five years. If, at the time of review, no members of the membership body have successfully applied for CEcol registration in the previous two year period then the licence will not be renewed.

Any bodies currently licensed to put forward applicants for registration as a Chartered Ecologist will be listed on the CIEEM website.

<sup>3</sup> This may be in addition to or instead of the body’s own disciplinary process.

## Application process

There are two possible routes to Chartered Ecologist (to take account of more specialist roles):

<b>ROUTE A: GENERALIST</b>	<b>ROUTE B: SPECIALIST</b>
Applicants must demonstrate...	Applicants must demonstrate...
<p><b>Accomplished</b> level (or above) competence in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. SM3 Scientific method: interpretation and evidence-based reporting</li> <li>b. PC1 Professional conduct</li> <li>c. C1 Communication: Effective communication, negotiation and influencing</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accomplished</b> level (or above) competence in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. SM3 Scientific method: interpretation and evidence-based reporting</li> <li>b. PC1 Professional conduct</li> <li>c. C1 Communication: Effective communication, negotiation and influencing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Six</b> additional technical competencies and two additional transferable competencies at <b>Accomplished</b> level or above</p>	<p><b>Two</b> additional technical competencies at the <b>Authoritative</b> level</p>
<p><b>One</b> further technical <b>or</b> transferable competency at <b>Accomplished</b> level or above</p>	<p><b>Four</b> additional technical <b>or</b> transferable competencies at the <b>Accomplished</b> level or above, at least <b>two</b> of which must be technical competencies</p>
<p><b>Total number of competencies required = 12</b></p>	<p><b>Total number of competencies required = 9</b></p>

In making a case for competence, applicants are required to emphasise the **ecological** context of their relevant experience. The three mandatory competencies (one technical, two transferable) that are common to both routes have been identified as being core characteristics of a Chartered Ecologist.

Applicants must determine which entrant band they fall into using the table on the following page and note the requirements.

Entrant band	Description	Requirements	Notes
A	CIEEM Full member or Fellow, with Full member status having been achieved through an assessment of competence (i.e. <b>after</b> May 2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve Full membership you will have already demonstrated competence at an Accomplished level in up to seven competencies. You may therefore carry forward any of these competencies as part of your written application for Chartered Ecologist. This means that you will not need to provide detailed written evidence of your competence in these nominated competencies, but are still required to do so for the balance of additional competencies as required by the Generalist or Specialist route.</li> <li>It is permissible to carry forward any of the three mandatory competencies if these have been previously evidenced successfully.</li> <li>If you would like to claim Authoritative level competence in any of your previously evidenced competencies, you will need to provide fresh written evidence of your claim.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competencies carried forward will not be reassessed as part of your written application, but you will be expected to be able to provide sufficiently detailed examples that demonstrate a minimum of Accomplished level competence in these areas at a Professional Review Interview.</li> <li>If since you achieved Full member status the nature of your work has changed or your career has progressed such that you will find it difficult to confidently do so, we would <b>strongly advise you <u>not</u></b> to carry the related competencies forward but to submit fresh written evidence for a different competency based on your current strengths and more recent experience.</li> <li>If required, the CIEEM Secretariat can advise you on when you achieved Full member status and which competencies you may carry forward.</li> </ul>
B	CIEEM Full member or Fellow, with Full member status having been achieved <u>prior</u> to the introduction of assessment of competence (i.e. <b>before</b> May 2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As you achieved Full membership prior to the introduction of the competence-assessed process, you do not have any pre-assessed competencies to carry forward. However, so that you are not at a disadvantage, it is permissible for you to <b>nominate <u>up to</u></b> six competencies at the Accomplished level (or above) as part of your written application for Chartered Ecologist. This means that you will only need to provide detailed written evidence of your competence for the balance of additional competencies as required by the Generalist or Specialist route.</li> <li>It is <u>not</u> permissible to nominate any of the three mandatory competencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will be expected to be able to answer questions confidently on <u>all chosen competencies</u>, including nominated competencies, at your Professional Review Interview. You will therefore need to prepare sufficiently detailed examples that demonstrate a minimum of Accomplished level competence in all of these areas.</li> <li>You may of course choose to submit written evidence for more than six competencies and nominate fewer. Doing so may in fact assist your preparation for a potential Professional Review Interview.</li> </ul>

<p><b>C</b></p>	<p>CIEEM Associate member.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To achieve CIEEM Associate membership you may have already demonstrated competence at the <b>Capable</b> level in up to seven competencies and should be familiar with CIEEM's Competency Framework. Whilst these competencies are not at the right level to be carried forward as part of an application, it is permissible for you to apply directly to become a Chartered Ecologist without first becoming a Full CIEEM member. This means that you will need to provide detailed written evidence of your competence in the full number of competencies as required by the Generalist or Specialist route.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are successful in your application to become a Chartered Ecologist you will also be awarded Full member status as part of the process.</li> <li>If you are <u>not</u> successful in your application to become a Chartered Ecologist you may be offered Full member status if you have reached the required minimum standard for that level of membership.</li> <li>If you are <u>not</u> successful in your application, any competencies successfully evidenced at the Accomplished level or above will be stored against your membership record and may count towards a future application for Full membership or Chartered Ecologist status.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D</b></p>	<p>Professional Ecologist <u>not</u> currently a member of CIEEM.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As you are not currently a CIEEM member you will not have any previously assessed competencies to carry forward as part of your application. However, it is now permissible for you to apply directly to become a Chartered Ecologist without first becoming a Full CIEEM member. This means that you will need to provide detailed written evidence of your competence in the full number of competencies as required by the Generalist or Specialist route.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are successful in your application to become a Chartered Ecologist you will also be awarded Full member status as part of the process.</li> <li>If you are <u>not</u> successful in your application to become a Chartered Ecologist you may be offered Full member status if you have reached the required minimum standard for that level of membership.</li> <li>If you are <u>not</u> successful in your application, any competencies successfully evidenced at the Accomplished level or above will be stored and may count towards a future application for CIEEM membership or Chartered Ecologist status.</li> </ul>
<p><b>E</b></p>	<p>Eligible member of a professional body licensed by CIEEM to nominate candidates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you are a member of a professional body licensed by CIEEM to nominate candidates for Chartered Ecologist, please consult their procedures in the first instance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are currently no professional bodies that have been awarded a license.</li> </ul>

Applicants for registration are required to complete an application form. Their competencies must be endorsed by two sponsors who know the applicant professionally, and who will confirm the information that the applicant has provided is correct to the best of their knowledge. Sponsors should be Fellows or Full members of CIEEM or the equivalent grades of other bodies licensed by CIEEM to put forward applicants for registration. Line managers or close work colleagues may act as sponsors. Sponsors need not be members of the same professional body. Sponsors cannot be related to the applicant.

Sponsors may be asked to supply a reference for the applicant or further information at any stage during the assessment process.

### Assessment and outcomes

Assessment of applications is undertaken in two stages. Stage One is a desk-based assessment undertaken independently by three assessors who are themselves Chartered Ecologists. Each assessor provides scores to reflect their assessment of each competency and feedback that might support any future resubmission of competencies assessed as insufficiently evidenced. Scores are attributed by assessors according to the following criteria:

Score	Definition	Examples/clarification
3	Excellent response, exceeding what would be expected for the level of competence claimed.	Meets requirements of the competency claimed and, in at least one aspect, meets the requirements of the competency at the level above that being claimed (where applicable).
2	Response that meets the requirements for the level of competence claimed.	Covers the necessary elements of the competency description.  As long as the <b>majority</b> of the descriptors for this competency are evidenced this is deemed sufficient in proving competence.
1	Response that meets some aspects of what is required but not all, or not at the expected level.	Evidence that would fall in this category includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate application of STARE (especially competence claimed but no supporting evidence provided (e.g. no Evaluation)).</li> <li>• Some aspects of the competency covered adequately but evidence does not sufficiently address the breadth of the competency.</li> <li>• Only a small proportion of descriptors are evidenced.</li> </ul>
0	Evidence fails to address the competency in any meaningful way.	Wrong competency claimed (e.g. confusion between EcIA and EIA) or misunderstanding of the competency (as often happens with Data & Document Management and interdisciplinary collaboration).  Evidence does not meet the requirements of the competence level being claimed <b>or</b> even the level below.
<b>R (Referral)</b>	Response raises significant concerns about the applicant being suitable for membership at the level they are applying for.	For example, they describe doing protected species surveys but do not show that they are aware this needs to be covered by an appropriate license. Evidence under any competency that suggests they may have acted in contravention of the Code of Professional Conduct.

Secretariat staff collate all the submitted scores and feedback and calculate the majority outcome for each competency. Each competency needs to be awarded a score of 2 or higher by at least two of the assessors to be deemed successfully evidenced. All evidenced competencies need to be successful for an applicant to be invited to move on to Stage 2 of the process. Competencies carried forward from previous assessment and any nominated competencies are not assessed at this stage.

Should the application pass the Stage One assessment the applicant will be invited to attend a Professional Review Interview. Some applicants may be offered the opportunity to resubmit evidence for assessment. All written competencies successfully evidenced at Stage 1 will be stored against the applicant's record and can be carried forward as part of a new application without the need for further assessment.

Interviews are typically held by videoconference and are conducted by two assessors who are usually, but not always, the Stage One assessors. In exceptional circumstances the assessors may agree to conduct an interview face-to-face. At the Professional Review Interview the applicant will have the opportunity to demonstrate that they are practising at or above the required standard by drawing on their relevant experience as an ecologist. Following the interview, the assessors discuss the applicant's performance and scores are attributed to each response using the scoring criteria below:

Score	What this means
3	The applicant gave a confident, strong answer and clearly demonstrated an excellent understanding of the issues involved and their ability to act at, or above, the required level for the claimed level of competence.
2	The applicant answered the question well (although may have required a little prompting), clearly demonstrating a good understanding of the issues and their ability to act at the required level for the claimed level of competence.
1	The applicant struggled to answer the question without significant help. The answer given did not clearly demonstrate understanding and an ability to act at the required level for the claimed level of competence.
0	The applicant was unable to provide any cogent answer to the question.

Applicants will be told the outcome of the Stage Two assessment as promptly as possible by Secretariat staff but, if successful, will not be able to refer to themselves as a Chartered Ecologist or use the post-nominal 'CEcol' until they receive written confirmation, either by email or by post. However, applicants will be able to refer to themselves as having applied for registration as a Chartered Ecologist.

### **Unsuccessful applications and appeals**

An unsuccessful application, either at Stage One or Stage Two of the assessment process, will be notified to the applicant, together with feedback on why the application has not been successful. Applicants are encouraged to use the feedback with which they have been provided to improve any future application.

Non-CIEEM member applicants may be offered Full membership of CIEEM, and may be encouraged to continue to work towards CEcol status, if they successfully evidence the appropriate number of competencies, and if those competencies satisfy the required ratios of technical and transferable evidence for Full membership.

It is possible to appeal the outcome of an application at each stage of the process using the procedure below. An appeal must be lodged with the Secretariat within 30 days of notification of the failure of the application and must be accompanied by the appropriate fee which will be refunded if the appeal is upheld.

- i. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified and given feedback as to why their application has failed as soon as possible after a decision has been reached.
- ii. Any applicant who feels that their application has been failed incorrectly has recourse to an Appeals Process, provided they have sufficient grounds for appeal. The only grounds on which the Secretariat shall



consider an appeal are failure of process – for example if an applicant thinks that assessment criteria have been incorrectly applied – and not simply a difference of opinion.

- iii. An appeal must be lodged in writing with the Secretariat within 30 days of notification of the failure of the application and must be accompanied by the appropriate administration fee which will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. The appellant must clearly state their grounds for appeal, providing evidence of the proposed failure of process.
- iv. Appeals will be considered by CIEEM's Membership Operations Manager or Head of Membership in the first instance. Should these officers agree that the appellant has presented sufficient evidence to justify further investigation, the original application and this evidence will be sent to the Chair of the Membership Admissions Committee (MAC) or, in the case of applications to Chartered Ecologist, to the Chair of the Registration Authority (RA) for review. A decision to send an application for review does not constitute acceptance that an appeal is justified or should be upheld.
- v. Should the Chair of the relevant committee have played any part in the assessment process prior to the appeal being lodged, the review will be undertaken by the Vice Chair of that committee.
- vi. The outcome of this 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 membership fee shall be refunded but the application administration fee is retained by CIEEM.

### **Continuing registration**

Chartered Ecologists remain on the Register provided:

- they maintain an appropriate level of membership of CIEEM or another body licensed by CIEEM;
- they remain active in the profession;
- they maintain their professional competence and evidence this by undertaking regular continuing professional development at or above the required minimum level;
- they are not found to be in breach of the Chartered Ecologist Code of Conduct; and
- they pay any fees due in relation to their continuing registration.

Chartered Ecologists will be subject to random auditing of their compliance with the minimum CPD requirement. Failure to provide evidence of CPD or comply with the audit may be viewed as a breach of the Chartered Ecologist Code of Conduct.

### **Chartered Ecologist Code of Conduct**

Registrants are required to comply at all times with the Chartered Ecologist Code of Conduct. Complaints against a Chartered Ecologist will be processed by CIEEM in accordance with its published Disciplinary Regulations.

### **Reassessment**

Chartered Ecologists are required to be assessed for continuing registration every seven years. Registrants can voluntarily apply for reassessment up to 12 months before it is due.

Reassessment will be based on the following evidence:

- Submission and examination of the Registrant's CPD records for the previous three years;
- A statement by the Registrant of their work achievements since the previous assessment; and
- A statement by the Registrant that details how they have maintained or enhanced their level of competence such that their competence is Accomplished or Authoritative over a wide range of competencies.

Re-assessment will normally be a desk-based assessment but the Registrant may be called for a Professional Review Interview, which will be carried out by videoconference, and which attracts a fee.