



**MEMBERSHIP REGULATIONS:
INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

NOVEMBER 2025

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Commented [SP1]: Looks the most sensible place to put it

Commented [RE2R1]: Agreed

Membership Profile

CIEEM members work for a wide range of ecological/environmental employers. Job roles are extremely varied and range from surveying and analysing field data to providing high-level input into environmental policy. Our membership varies greatly in terms of professional standing, with chief executives and directors of large organisations at one end of the scale, to student members who are studying at university/college before entering the sector professionally.

This unique mix of members makes networking within CIEEM a particularly worthwhile and stimulating experience. CIEEM members are practitioners in ecology and environmental management and are bound by a strongly held Code of Professional Conduct which brings an ethical dimension to their work. They are also required to maintain and develop their skills through Continuing Professional Development. If this appeals to you, CIEEM could be your natural professional home.

There are several grades of CIEEM membership: Fellow, Chartered, Full, Associate, Qualifying and Student. There is also an option to become a Retired member. Fellows are Full members designated as Fellows on account of their outstanding contribution to the practice of ecology and environmental management. Members with a sufficient level of competence may also apply for Chartered status – either as a Chartered Ecologist (through CIEEM) and/or as a Chartered Environmentalist (through the Society for the Environment).

Eligibility Criteria

1. CIEEM's Competency Framework is used as the basis for membership eligibility for Associate membership and above.
2. The purpose behind the eligibility criteria is to ensure that membership reflects a high level of professional competence and integrity and that CIEEM members are recognised as professionals in their field, both by other professions and by organisations whose work involves ecology and the natural environment.
3. 'Environmental management' here means ecological management of the natural environment. Examples of work that does not generally fall within the competence of CIEEM are waste management, environmental health, food safety, engineering, landscape architecture and development planning.
4. We will accept applications for membership appropriate to an individual's self-assessed competence level, although admission will be at the discretion of the Secretariat staff or CIEEM's Membership Admissions Committee (MAC) after review.
5. The regulations listed below are currently correct but CIEEM's Governing Board may amend them from time to time.

Membership Eligibility

Members are very unlikely to have competence in all of the themes and competencies found in CIEEM's Competency Framework and will have a competency profile that is a combination of different competence levels as appropriate to their background and experience in different roles (*i.e.* they will not be Capable or Proficient at everything). However, there is a minimum expectation of levels of competence for the Associate and Full membership grades and 'Professional Standards' (PS1) is a mandatory competency for all of these.

Applications for Fellowship are reviewed by a panel of current Fellows and the Chair of the Membership Admissions Committee (MAC). Applications for Associate and Full membership and Chartered Environmentalist status are reviewed by experienced assessors who work under the guidance of MAC. Applications for Chartered Ecologist status are reviewed by experienced assessors who work under the guidance of CIEEM's Registration Authority. Applications for Qualifying and Student grades are reviewed and processed by Secretariat staff.

Student Membership

Applicants for Student membership must be engaged in a full-time or part-time course leading to an examined degree, HND, Foundation degree or equivalent qualification.

On ceasing to be a student all those wishing to remain members of CIEEM must apply for a higher grade of membership within one year of completing their course.

Qualifying Membership

Qualifying membership is open to applicants at the earliest stages of their career, whether graduates or non-graduates. Applicants 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). Qualifying members are expected to upgrade their membership within four years of being awarded Qualifying member status.

Qualifying members are not entitled to use a suffix.

Associate Membership (ACIEEM)

Applicants for Associate membership must be currently engaged in or actively seeking professional practice in **ecology or ecological management of the natural environment**.

Level of competence and expected relevant professional experience:

- Must demonstrate competence at least at the **Capable** level of competence in a total of seven competencies, one of which must be Professional Standards. A minimum of three of the competencies should be from the technical competencies list and two from the transferable competencies list (other than Professional Standards); **and**
 - With a relevant degree¹ - an expected, but not mandatory, three or more years relevant professional experience in the last ten years;
- or
- Without a relevant degree – an expected, but not mandatory, six years or more of relevant professional experience in the last ten years.

Commented [SP3]: ditto

More information to further evidence competencies may be required. This might be the submission of material referred to in the competency assessment section of the application form.

Those with less than the requisite competencies may be offered an alternative grade.

Associate members are entitled to use the suffix ACIEEM after their name.

Full Membership (MCIEEM)

Applicants for Full Membership must be currently engaged in or actively seeking professional practice in **ecology or ecological management of the natural environment**.

Those with less than the requisite number of competencies at the required level may apply for a lower membership level; once they obtain sufficient competence for Full membership they should apply to upgrade. Whilst welcoming applications from candidates specialising in a particular area, CIEEM considers that for Full membership there will normally be a requirement to demonstrate proficiency in more than one species group and to place surveys in a wider ecological context.

Level of competence and expected relevant professional experience:

- Must demonstrate competence at least at the **Proficient** level of competence in a total of seven competencies, one of which must be Professional Standards. A minimum of three of the competencies should be from the technical competencies list and two from the transferable competencies list (other than Professional Standards); **and**
- With a relevant degree¹ – an expected, but not mandatory, four or more years relevant professional experience in the last ten years; **or**
- Without a relevant degree – an expected, but not mandatory, eight or more years relevant professional experience in the last ten years.

More information to further evidence competencies may be required. This might be the submission of material referred to in the competency assessment section of the application form.

Those with less than the requisite competencies may be offered an alternative grade.

Full members are entitled to use the suffix MCIEEM after their name.

Chartership

Members who hold Chartered Ecologist (CEcol) status must adhere to the Regulations linked to the Register. Members who hold Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) status are required to follow the regulations of their own professional body and any other requirements as set out by the Society for the Environment, which holds the CEnv Register.

Fellowship (FCIEEM)

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. Fellows may use the post-nominal 'FCIEEM' and attend the annual Fellows Forum to help guide the work of the Chartered Institute.

¹ Depending on the ecological content, the following degrees might be considered relevant: Ecology, Biological Sciences, Zoology, Botany, Countryside Management, Environmental Sciences, Marine and Freshwater Management, Earth Sciences, Agriculture, Forestry, Geography, Landscape Management.

Commented [SP4]: Is it time to lose these?

Commented [RE5R4]: I guess this could potentially put people off applying if they haven't got this, alternatively it could make more people apply that are not ready? - tricky one

Commented [6R4]: maybe let's add this to the Dec MAC agenda to decide please

Commented [SP7]: What do you think about flipping the order and starting at Student?

Commented [RE8R7]: I think it that would be a good idea.

The Role of a Fellow

It is important that CIEEM has a strong Fellowship. It is recognised that Fellowship brings personal reward and accolade to those elected to the Chartered Institute's highest category of membership. Equally, CIEEM benefits from having the most eminent and highly respected people in the profession as Fellows.

It is hoped that Fellows will use their best endeavours to contribute to the work of CIEEM when called upon to do so, or as the opportunity arises. There are many different roles that Fellows can fulfil, ranging from high profile ambassadors and chairmanships, through participation in working groups, panels and committees, to the provision of desk-based advice to the Chartered Institute on particular issues.

The principal criterion is that each Fellow should have made an 'outstanding contribution' to the profession of ecology and environmental management in one or more of the areas described below. Candidates should also be highly respected and have unimpeachable integrity, which will be confirmed by the sponsors and supported by the evidence in the testimonial and application documents. Candidates should have attained a position of seniority and substantial experience within the profession.

'Outstanding contribution' to our profession is defined as:

- research which has practical application in the profession of ecology and environmental management;
- establishing or raising professional standards through developments in training, quality standards or methods;
- influencing the evolution of policies or legislation relating to the natural environment;
- promotion of ecological professionalism among employers, organizations, companies and other institutes;
- innovation through establishing new partnerships, leadership, techniques or awareness for ecological professionalism;
- the practical application of the principles of ecology and environmental management;
- advancement of biodiversity conservation.

An applicant must be a Full Member of CIEEM at the time of making the application for election as a Fellow. Full guidance on the eligibility criteria and application process is available from the CIEEM website.

Retired Membership

Retired members are Fellows, Full or Associate members of CIEEM who are undertaking no more than a maximum of 24 days paid work in any subscription year.

Retired members may use the suffix FCIEEM (rtd), MCIEEM (rtd) or ACIEEM (rtd), as appropriate.

General Information

1. **Charter and By-laws** - all members are required to abide by and respect CIEEM's Charter and By-laws. The liability of members is limited to £1.00.
2. **Code of Professional Conduct** – All members are bound by CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct, the latest version of which can be found on [CIEEM's website](#). All applicants must sign a declaration that they have, to the best of their knowledge, practised in accordance with the Code and will continue to do so.
3. **Appropriate use of membership suffix** - any reference to CIEEM membership made by an individual member, including in their professional literature and reports, should clearly state what grade of membership they hold to avoid misleading the public as to the level of experience and competence of the member concerned. This is also applicable to retired members who should use the appropriate suffix. In some instances, it may be appropriate for reference to be made to the general membership of CIEEM, for example where multiple employees hold membership, but every effort should be made to avoid ambiguity.
4. **Continuing Professional Development** – Fellows, Full, Associate, Qualifying Members and Retired Members with a Chartered status must fulfil any current CPD requirements. The current CPD requirements can be found on [CIEEM's website](#).
5. **Sponsors** – sponsors cannot be related to the applicant.
 - a. For Associate and Full membership applications, two sponsors are required. If possible, at least one sponsor should be a CIEEM member of at least the same grade as that being sought. The second sponsor should ideally also be a member of CIEEM but if this is not possible, they should be a member of a similar professional body at a grade equivalent to the CIEEM Associate or Full grade (whichever is applicable) or a professional colleague.
 - b. It is acceptable for one of your sponsors to be a member of the CIEEM Secretariat, provided they hold the same grade or a higher grade than the one you are applying for. However, both sponsors cannot be from the Secretariat;
 - c. Members approached to be a Sponsor whilst they are the subject of a Professional Conduct investigation should consider refraining from acting in this capacity until an outcome of the investigation has been determined. Members that are the subject of a Professional Conduct investigation that has progressed beyond a Preliminary Investigation to a Hearing are not permitted to act as a Sponsor until an outcome of the investigation has been determined.
 - d. If it is not possible to find a CIEEM member to act as a sponsor two non-member sponsors as described above will usually be acceptable. Please contact the CIEEM office if you have difficulties in obtaining sponsors or need further advice.
 - e. **All non-member sponsors** will need to provide a copy of their CV or work profile to demonstrate their suitability as a sponsor. It will be the applicant's responsibility to request this information from the non-member sponsor and forward it with their application.
 - f. For Qualifying membership applications, one sponsor is required. The sponsor must not be related to the applicant and they do not have to be a CIEEM member.
 - g. Applications for Student membership do not require a sponsor.
6. **Voluntary/Research work and unemployment** - Competence gained whilst in relevant voluntary work, undertaking relevant research or during periods of unemployment will be considered within an application as part of the assessment process.

7. **Deferral of subscription fees** - if a Fellow, Full, Associate or Retired member is unable to renew their annual membership subscription because of unemployment or financial circumstances, an application for deferral of payment can be made for that year, and exceptionally extended for the following year only, provided that all arrears are paid upon gaining employment and within one year of the expiry of the deferral agreement. All conditions of membership will otherwise continue to apply. It must be understood that you will have to pay your deferred subscription fee in full and if you have not paid by the following year you will have to pay two years' subscription fees to maintain your membership. Because of this, we recommend that members in deferral pay subscription fees as soon as possible or even in stages. We will do all that we can to help you come to a payment schedule that is suitable for you. Members whose subscription is in deferral will not be permitted to upgrade their subscription, and therefore increase their outstanding debt, until all outstanding fees owing have been paid.
8. **Abeyance Agreement** – If a Fellow, Full, Associate or Qualifying member is about to take a career break an application for Abeyance can be made to put their membership on hold. Members who are still in relevant work are not eligible for such an agreement. The most common reasons for signing an abeyance agreement are parental leave, child or family care, voluntary work, long-term illness or travel overseas.

Whilst in abeyance members do not have to pay subscription fees but will continue to receive selected member benefits to enable them to keep in touch with developments in the sector and undertake some CPD should they choose to. CPD courses can also be undertaken at the member rate or at CIEEM's low-income rate (if eligible). However, members in abeyance are not to undertake any relevant professional employment, so are not eligible to use post-nominals or advertise their services (if applicable) for the duration of the agreement.

An abeyance agreement can be renewed for up to five years but an extension **must** be requested every year. You can end an abeyance agreement at any time by contacting the Secretariat and paying a pro-rata subscription fee.

When wishing to resume their CIEEM membership, one of the following procedures to reinstate membership shall commence immediately upon notification, depending on how long the member has been in abeyance:

- 8.1. For an abeyance period of up to 12 months, no further action is necessary by the member.
- 8.2. Within the second or third consecutive year of abeyance, membership may be reinstated immediately. The member will be entered into the annual audit of CPD in the following year.
- 8.3. Agreements terminated after more than three consecutive years of abeyance (to a maximum of five years) may be reinstated immediately but the member will be required to submit a CPD plan within six months of reinstatement. The CPD plan should detail what activity the member will be undertaking to gain/regain knowledge and expertise relevant to their role and the grade of membership they currently hold. Activity undertaken will be reviewed against this plan by the Training, Education and Career Development Committee (TECDC) as part of the annual audit of CPD in the following year. Failure to submit a suitable development plan within six months of reinstatement may result in a temporary suspension of membership until such a plan has been received.

It is also possible to place Chartered status into abeyance:

- Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) status can be placed into abeyance on an annual basis for a maximum of five consecutive years. Reinstatement of CEnv status can be made following the processes outlined in points 8.1 and 8.2 above. Members holding their CEnv status in

abeyance for longer than three years must successfully undertake a Professional Review Interview (PRI) before this can be reinstated. Costs associated with the PRI are payable by the member.

- Chartered Ecologist (CEcol) status can be placed into abeyance on an annual basis for a maximum of seven consecutive years. Reinstatement of CEcol status can be made following the processes outlined in points 8.1 and 8.2 (above). The Registrant's reassessment period does not restart but rather resumes. Members holding their CEcol status in abeyance for longer than three years must successfully undertake the CEcol reinstatement process before their Chartered status can be reinstated. The process requires a written application consisting of two parts, first one being assessed upon return and second upon 12 months of being reinstated. The cost for reinstatement is payable by the member.

Application Fees

1. All applications are acknowledged by email within 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.
2. Any charges incurred by CIEEM due to cheque payments being declined will be your responsibility.
3. If your application is 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. The invoice is generated on a pro-rata basis. Please see the following table for more information:

Month application is successful	The proportion of subscription fee due
October, November, December	Full amount
January, February, March	Three-quarters full amount
April, May, June	Half full amount
July, August	One-quarter full amount
September	Full amount for following subscription year.

All current application fees can be found on [CIEEM's website](#).

Annual Subscription Payment

Membership fees are due on **1st October annually**. Existing members will be invoiced annually for their renewal premiums. Subscriptions for membership paid by Direct Debit are collected annually, bi-annually or quarterly dependant on the payment schedule selected by the member.

If you are a UK Taxpayer then you are eligible for tax relief on your membership subscriptions as CIEEM is an HMRC approved body. You can make this claim either by contacting HMRC to adjust your PAYE Tax code if you are employed, or if you are self-employed by completing box 19 on your Self-assessment tax return.

Membership Application Procedures

General Guidance

- 1. The Membership Admissions Committee (MAC) is a sub-committee of the Governing Board authorised to vet membership applications. Additional assessors, who undertake the same training and moderation as members of the Committee, work alongside the MAC to review applications. Final approval of applicants is made by MAC on behalf of the Governing Board.
- 2. Applications for Full and Associate membership normally take between two and four months from submission to determination.

Commented [SP9]: Time to edit?

Application Processing

- 1. Application received at the CIEEM office and acknowledged.
- 2. Details checked to ensure the applicant has provided sufficient information. The onus is on the applicant to provide sufficient information to allow the assessors to judge the summary of competencies. Applicants who have not provided sufficient information are requested to submit further details.
- 3. Student and Qualifying members are admitted upon receipt of an application and assessment by the Secretariat, providing eligibility criteria are met.
- 4. Each application for Associate and Full membership is copied to up to three assessors who examine each application independently and return their assessments directly to the Secretariat. 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	A response that meets the requirements for the level of competence claimed.	Covers the necessary elements of the competency description. As long as the majority of the descriptors for this competency are evidenced this is deemed sufficient in proving competence.

1	A response that meets some aspects of what is required but not all, or not at the expected level.	<p>Evidence that would fall in this category includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate application of STARE (especially competence claimed but no supporting evidence provided (e.g. no Evaluation)). • Some aspects of the competency covered adequately but the evidence does not sufficiently address the breadth of the competency. • Only a small proportion of descriptors are evidenced.
0	The evidence fails to address the competency in any meaningful way.	<p>The wrong competency claimed (e.g. confusion between EclA and EIA) or misunderstanding of the competency (as often happens with Data & Document Management).</p> <p>Evidence does not meet the requirements of the level being claimed or the immediate level below.</p>
R (Referral)	Response raises significant concerns about the applicant being suitable for membership at the level they are applying for.	<p>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 suggests they may have acted in contravention of the Code of Professional Conduct.</p>

5. CIEEM Secretariat staff collate all the submitted scores and feedback and calculate the highest score outcome for each competency. Each competency needs to be awarded a score of 2 or higher to be deemed successfully evidenced. All evidenced competencies need to be successful for an applicant to be admitted at the level they have applied for. Competencies carried forward from the previous assessment are not reassessed.
6. Candidates will be informed of their application outcome by email. There are two possible outcomes:
 - The application is successful, and the candidate will be admitted as a member.
 - An insufficient number of competencies have been assessed as successfully evidenced. All competencies successfully evidenced will be stored against the candidate's record and can be carried forward as part of a new submission without the need for further assessment. For the competencies that were not successfully evidenced at the level being claimed, the evidence will be assessed at the competency level below the one applied for (if applicable). This may result in the candidate being offered a lower grade of membership. For all competencies which were not sufficiently evidenced at the level being claimed, feedback will be provided. Applicants have 30 days to accept or decline the lower grade offered.
7. Any member considering raising a complaint against a newly admitted member should do so via the standard complaints process.

The use of Generative AI in applications

1. Generative AI is a broad label used to describe any AI that can be used to create new content such as text, images, video, audio or code. It is an evolving technology that can present bring benefits by facilitating creativity and the development of ideas, supporting neurodivergence, and reducing language barriers. The use of Generative AI also presents potential risks.
2. At CIEEM, we recognise the benefits to some applicants of using Generative AI in certain aspects of the membership application process. We therefore choose to work transparently and through the provision of guidance than try to prohibit or limit the use of AI.
3. In line with current sector good practice, applicants are expected to be transparent where they have used generative AI tools in the development of an application. This information will not be passed to the assessors of an application and will not affect the outcome of the assessment.

Acceptable uses of AI in the application process

- to refine and articulate ideas, structure thoughts, and improve clarity.
- to check readability, spelling, grammar, clarity, brevity, and impact.

Unacceptable use of AI include

- to inflate or invent experience and competence.
- to copy and paste generic responses without editing them.
- providing the AI with an organisation's sensitive data.

CIEEM reserves the right to use systems that identify the use of AI in applications and to reject an application where unacceptable use of AI can be proven.

Unsuccessful Applications and Appeals

1. An unsuccessful application will be notified to the applicant, together with feedback on why the application has failed.
2. In the case of a failed application applicants wishing to appeal must notify the Secretariat of their intention to do so within 30 days. At this point, applicants will be provided with a copy of CIEEM's membership appeals process. Applicants must provide clear and concise grounds for appeal, considering all feedback provided during the application process.
3. The Membership Manager and/or Chief Executive Officer will review the entire application and decide if there are grounds for the application to be reviewed.
4. If there are suitable grounds for appeal the application is to 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 administration fee is retained by CIEEM.

Commented [SP10]: Looks the most sensible place to put it

Commented [RE11R10]: Agreed

Commented [SP12]: Probably needs an edit

Commented [RE13R12]: I haven't actually been through an appeal?

Professional conduct of members

1. CIEEM members at professional grades (Qualifying membership and above) have agreed to abide by the Code of Professional Conduct, which covers most of their professional behaviours.
2. However, all CIEEM members, including Student members, are expected to act with professional integrity and good conduct, avoiding behaviours likely to cause offence, towards each other and to the Chartered Institute's employees.
3. Any member exhibiting unprofessional, discourteous or offensive behaviour towards Secretariat staff, volunteers or other members may be referred to CIEEM's Governing Board to determine whether action is required.
 - i. The member has the right to supply any information or evidence in response to refute an allegation of unprofessional conduct.
 - ii. Should the member be found to have acted in an unprofessional manner, sanctions will be applied, including the suspension or withdrawal of their membership.

Professional conduct of member applicants, including those upgrading their membership

1. All parties involved in the membership application process are required to act with professional integrity and good conduct, avoiding behaviours likely to cause offence.
2. Any applicant/member that feels that they have been treated without such courtesy or respect as part of the application process should in the first instance raise the matter with the Head of Membership or CIEEM's Chief Executive Officer. Details of CIEEM's company complaints procedure will then be supplied and an internal review undertaken.
3. Any applicant/member exhibiting unprofessional, discourteous or offensive behaviour towards Secretariat staff or volunteers will have the processing of their application suspended whilst the matter is investigated.
 - i. The applicant/member has the right to supply any information or evidence in response to refute an allegation of unprofessional conduct.
 - ii. The matter may be referred to CIEEM's Governing Board to determine whether action is required.
 - iii. Should the applicant/member be found to have acted in an unprofessional manner, sanctions will be applied, including the suspension or withdrawal of their application.