

Document D

The Rough Guide

2010

The Rough Guide to IHE Professional Review

The Engineering Council and IHE

In 1999 The Engineering Council raised the standards required to become an Incorporated Engineer or a Chartered Engineer. The educational requirements increased and, for IEng, you now need a 3 year IEng degree or equivalent and for CEng it's a Masters degree.

In December 2003 UK SPEC was launched. It changed the specifications slightly, but more importantly introduced a single simplified route to Incorporated or Chartered Engineer for "non standard" applicants. This created fresh opportunities for progression for those of you who have a non approved HNC or degree, or those who have no qualifications at all. It's known as the Technical Report Option.

In autumn 2009 IHE's Professional Review was changed. You now explain your experience under each of the EC Statements (16 for IEng and CEng). This submission will be marked by Reviewers against the Engineering Council Statements of Competence and Commitment and, if acceptable, you are then called to interview. For the Chartered and Incorporated Reviews, you present one or two projects to a team of reviewers.

The Technical Report Option has also been streamlined but it's slightly different. All is explained in *Document CE4 and IE4*.

This document is mainly about the Standard Review for IEng and CEng – but first.....

What are the Technician routes?

The Engineering Technician Review submission is similar to that for the Engineers and so The Rough Guide to Professional Review is relevant, BUT remember to work to the Technician Statements of Competence and Commitment and aim for a much shorter submission. There's no interview for the Standard Route (if you have the right qualifications) but there is for the Individual Route (everybody else).

Approved NVQ 3 applicants shouldn't get called to interview as they have already proven to be competent in their area of work.

However, NVQs/SVQs should be within your current field of work and relatively recent. IHE's approved list is as follows:-

Transport Technical Support	Transportation (NTQ)
Construction Site Supervision	Technical Design
Built Environment Design	Design & Drafting
Laboratory operations	Site Technical Support
Plant Supervision	Highway Maintenance
Site Inspection	Specialist Operations
Road Safety (Engineering Pathway)	Contracting Construction Operations



Introduction

In the main, everybody is afraid of the Professional Review. On face value it seems a daunting prospect to compile a weighty submission on which somebody is going to judge your competence as an engineer. However, if you read between the lines, you can see that the submission is largely a summary of your career focusing in on work over the last few years showing your development and responsibility and giving details of that experience in order to demonstrate that your competence and commitment meets the Engineering Council's specification.

Getting Started

Everyone says they are going to start next week! I believe that most people put off their Professional Review because they do not know how to start and so the purpose of this "Guide" is to provide a template for your submission. Of course it is not compulsory to follow the guidance given but I hope that this simple overview will help you to get going.

The Review submission has a fairly basic format. It is a folder containing:-

- A title page
- A contents page
- Application forms and payment
- Academic certificates
- A CV
- A job description
- An organisation chart
- A summary of your review presentation (*not for EngTech*)
- Professional Development Forms (16 or 13)
- Documentary evidence
- Professional development plan and record
- Employer/ Proposer Form

The easiest way to make positive start is to get a folder and start to collect documents. Put in the title page, a contents page, your CV, job description, organisation chart, academic certificates and recent appraisals. If you look back at the format suddenly you're only missing a few bits, - yes, I know that the missing bits are the most important.

Attend a "Preparing for Review" course. These are organised and presented by IHE. They will give you an insight into the requirements and procedures and provide first hand information on an individual basis. Included in the course is a link to the relevant pages on the web-site, www.ihie.org.uk. I would recommend that, at the very least, every aspiring Engineer or Technician should download **Document E1** which summarises all the routes and **CE2**, **IE2** or **ET2** for full details of their review process.

It would also be beneficial to contact your local IHE branch and attend branch meetings. Attending will be a useful addition to your submission and will give you support and encouragement. It provides evidence of your commitment to continuing professional development and may even prove interesting!

Some Branches offer Review Workshops where applicants can receive one to one mentoring from Senior Reviewers and Mentors. This eases the burden of preparing the submission by setting targets and by ensuring that you are progressing in the right direction. For information regarding local help and Mentoring contact your Branch Secretary www.ihie.org.uk/about/local-ihie-branches/.



Presentation Advice

Use plain everyday English. Keep sentences short, 15 to 20 words. Make your documents personal. IHE wants to know what **you** did, how **you** did and why **you** did it.

Use 1.5 line spacing and font size 12. Keep to 250 words per statement and list relevant supporting evidence you will be submitting.

Put your name and date as a header on all your documents.

Proof read line by line. Ask a non-technical friend to check your grammar and see if they can understand what's written. Ask a colleague to check the technical aspects. Show your drafts to recently qualified colleagues.

CV

This covers the whole of your career showing your development as an engineer or technician and illustrating your acquisition of knowledge and your increased levels of responsibility. Your CV gives the reviewers a snap shot of the schemes in which you have been involved, demonstrating your input and responsibilities.

Most engineers work in a team but the Review is all about what you did. Tell IHE what work was your responsibility and what actions you took. Remember to say "I" not "we".

Professional Development Forms

The Professional Development Form is a standard format and it "does exactly what it says on the tin". These are at the heart of your submission.

You'll need to write about half a page covering at least two schemes for each of the EC Statements of Competence and Commitment (16 in all A1 to E4). Two schemes because this shows that you can perform consistently.

Also, list on each form the relevant documents which substantiate your descriptions.

Remember you will need to refer explicitly to:

- relevant regulations, standards, codes
- budgets, financial planning and control
- your responsibilities for in-house and external consultants, costs and overall management
- environmental and public interest issues and any ethical issues at stake

Check your submission by asking:

- Can others understand the relevance of my experience?
- Have I clearly explained how I manage safety and risk?
- Is the evidence appropriate to the referenced Engineering Council Statement?
- Am I working at the right level of responsibility?
- Is the experience still current? Are the Standards quoted still current?
- Have I made my role in the scheme clear?
- Is each role covered by more than one document (i.e. is my performance consistent?)
- Have I explained why I acted the way I did?
- If asked, can I explain why I did the work and how?
- Can I answer questions on the relevant engineering or management knowledge?
- Can I explain what I would have done differently in other situations?
- Can others find their way through the portfolio? (Always ask a friend or colleague to read it)



Example

Applicant John Smith

CEng

Role A.2 To engage in creative and innovative development

I was asked to undertake an options study for... I decided that standard barriers were unsuitable ... I identified..

Document 4 – Email to client

Your mentor will sign off the forms to show he agrees and that it's your work.

Documentary Evidence

The documentary evidence that you provide will probably make up the bulk of your submission. Obviously every applicant is going to err on the side of caution and include as much information as possible, but remember two things:

First, one document can cover more than one competence Statement in the Engineering Council's specification. You also need to make life both easy and interesting for your Reviewers. With this in mind make the documents that you select work hard for you, try to think quality rather than quantity. Do NOT put in lots of CPD certificates when an authenticated CPD record will do and, if you have included your Degree certificate, we don't want to see you HNC or ONC. Only include what is necessary. Marks are not awarded for padding and Reviewers will question you on your CPD anyway.

Second, you may want to bring further evidence with you to discuss at Review so only submit that which is completely necessary at this stage for the Reviewers to make an initial assessment.

When you are compiling your submission you will probably be collecting evidence over a period of time, so, when you file a document make sure that you write a few notes. These will serve as a useful memory jogger at a later date. Take time to go through the Statements of Competence and cross reference which roles each document complies with. When you put together the final submission select out the best documents which should help to reduce the number you include.

Below is a template for a simple reference grid (or matrix) that will enable you to select the documents from your collection which work best for you. You can download the template from the Optional Forms. When compiling documents and information, although you must demonstrate competence in all the statements, Role B is the most important as it is where you demonstrate your competence and your application to practice. You need to make sure that you have plenty of good quality evidence referenced to Statement B.

Document	Ref No	A1	A2	Etc Etc	E4
<i>Safety inspection report</i>	<i>Doc 1</i>	√			√

It often helps to set the scene by including photo of sites, before, after and during works. Make sure you check for safety infringements – a well known trap!

There is no need to copy standard information or manuals produced by others; just refer to them in the text showing what use you made of them.



If your evidence is from past projects, and standards or practices have changed, you must show by a note that you are aware of the current standards.

Your documents need not all be elegant – provided that any working papers, sketches or diary extracts are legible.

Reduce plans or drawings to A3 or A4 if possible: you can bring the full size drawing to the Review if you need to.

Review Presentation

Select a couple of your most significant schemes to present at the Review interview. They should demonstrate the range and depth of your experience, knowledge and responsibility. They can be two from those referred to in the Professional Development Forms or they can be new projects.

Choose a few documents to help you talk through the scheme, you can use plans, photos, illustrations or works programmes.

- Time yourself – allow for an hour including questions and answers. You will therefore only have thirty to forty minutes straight talking
- Write prompts on cards or on a copy of your Report, or on some folding A4 display boards
- Arrange your documents systematically for ease of access
- Practice using a tape recorder or with colleagues
- Arrange a mock review to see how you respond to questions
- Check your familiarity with the basic relevant standards, good practice guides etc
- Refresh your knowledge of Statement E and practice discussing professional issues

You may use your laptop, but the practicalities can be quite distracting and powerpoints can be too restricting as you will need to respond to Reviewers' questions which may move between documents.

General

As stated before, the **Documentary Evidence** is going to make up a good proportion of your submission. You will have listed these documents on your **Professional Development Forms** so they need to be easy for the IHE reviewers to find. It is a good idea to index each document and to use folder dividers or tabs to identify each one.

A good portfolio is easy to follow and assess. Reviewers don't want to waste time trying to track down information.

Remember that your CPD records should extend beyond the required two years and recent annual appraisals maybe used instead of a professional development plan and record.

You also need to get your **Professional Development Forms** signed by your mentor.

It is recommended that the person signing and supporting your application be your line manager. This is because they are the person best able to judge your competence and will have the best knowledge of your capabilities. Hopefully they will have been working with you and guiding you through the whole process. You can of course have more than one mentor and IHE can help by putting you in touch with one of its mentors to help you or an in-house mentor to understand what you need to do.

You also need to have an Employer Proposer Form completed by someone who knows you and your work and who is supporting your application. This may be your line manager who has acted as one of your Mentors and who has already signed your professional development forms or it maybe a more senior manager who is responsible for training. There is a standard form (301) in 'Essential Forms' on the web.



You are now ready to post **one copy** of your application to IHE including the relevant forms and payment. Remember that you are told to compile **four** copies of your submission, one to IHE, one to keep and two to send on to your allocated Reviewers.

The Institute also wants a copy of the whole submission on CD to keep on file - so start scanning!

Conclusion

Your Review application is now a single stage submission followed by an interview.

The weighty parts of the paper submission are:

- The Professional Development Forms, one for each Engineering Council Statements of Competence and Commitment outlining your experience
- Documentary evidence

Remember that, even if your submission is unsuccessful, you cannot fail before Interview. If the Reviewers have concerns about whether the submission meets the requirements you will not be called for interview, instead you will receive feedback from them and will be asked to submit further information in order to progress your application. In any case, you will receive copies of their assessments when the review date is confirmed.

Please read this *Rough Guide* alongside and additional to all the other Institute documents and advice.

Applicants with NVQ Level 4 or those looking to progress through the Technical Report Route should contact the Institute at Head Office for further guidance.

Wishing you every success in your application,

Chris Hodgson IEng FIHE

