

Are you searching for a new role in the engineering profession? And looking for an edge over your competitors that will make you stand out from the crowd? If so, you should seriously consider becoming professionally registered with the Engineering Council, as an ICT Technician (ICTTech), Engineering Technician (EngTech), Incorporated Engineer (IEng) or Chartered Engineer (CEng).

Gaining professional registration (also referred to as professional qualifications) and having letters after your name enables employers and the wider society to have confidence that you have the knowledge, skills and attitude they value. It demonstrates that you have undertaken an independent assessment of your competence and understanding of engineering principles and shown a commitment to keeping these skills up-to-date.

This guide sets out to briefly explain what professional registration is, why it is important for you to work towards achieving one of the qualifications, eligibility requirements and the registration process.

What is professional registration?

Professional registration is recognition, through membership of a relevant professional engineering institution, that an individual's competence has been assessed, and they have attained the standard required for admission to the national register at the appropriate level. It is open to any competent practising engineer, with different levels and pathways to registration available. The categories have been developed to provide a progressive registration structure.

As the UK regulatory body for the engineering profession, the Engineering Council sets and maintains the internationally recognised standards of professional competence and ethics against which applicants are assessed. These are detailed in the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC): www.engc.org.uk/ukspec. Those who meet the standards are placed on the national registers of over 235,000 ICTTechs, EngTechs, IEngs and CEng, held by the Engineering Council.

The standing of registrants is increasingly being recognised around the world. In some cases, professional qualifications are required for particular work. Evidence of registration with the Engineering Council can prove helpful in applying for jobs and tendering for work abroad.

Why register?

Professional registration has many benefits, not only for individuals and their employers, but also for the profession, the UK economy and wider society.

Benefits to the individual include:

- Improved career prospects
- Status of being part of a technological elite
- International recognition of your qualifications
- Recognition of your expertise and hard work
- Higher earnings potential
- Greater influence within your organisation and industry
- High self-esteem
- Access to life-long learning
- Letters after your name

Benefits to employers include:

- Increased technical credibility with customers
- The means to benchmark the qualifications of employees
- Assurance that the employee has satisfied a rigorous assessment of their engineering competence
- Confirmation that the credentials being claimed are actually held
- Assurance that the employee is keeping up-to-date with professional codes of conduct
- A means to satisfy requirements of the Quality Management Systems standards e.g. ISO 9001:2008, IIP, Indemnity insurance

How to register

UK-SPEC describes the requirements that have to be met in order to gain EngTech, IEng or CEng registration, and gives examples of ways of doing this. The ICTTech Standard gives the same information for ICTTech. These documents enable individuals and employers to find out whether they or their staff can meet the requirements, and explains the steps necessary.

Anyone wishing to be registered must first join one of the 36 professional engineering institutions licensed to assess candidates. (Please note that not all institutions cover all categories). These are listed on www.engc.org.uk/institutions. The chosen institution will be able to assess your qualifications, training and experience and let you know if anything further is required. Many of them will also help you to find a suitable mentor.

The assessment process – known as a professional review – starts with a written application made in accordance with the requirements of the particular institution concerned. A detailed description of the format for this will be provided by the institution. For IEng and CEng a professional review interview is mandatory. Once you meet the registration criteria, they will submit a registration form to the Engineering Council on your behalf.

Which category am I eligible for?

Your educational qualifications can provide a rough guide to this, because they demonstrate the level of your knowledge and understanding. However, your all round professional competence will be the deciding factor, and there are several other ways in which you can demonstrate the required knowledge and understanding if you don't have the relevant qualifications. These can be found in UK-SPEC, or your chosen institution will be able to assess your qualifications, training and experience, and advise you.

Accredited qualifications

To see which academic qualifications partially or fully satisfy the education requirement for IEng and CEng registration please visit: www.engc.org.uk/courses

To see which qualifications and programmes have been approved as contributing towards EngTech or ICTTech registration please visit: <http://www.engc.org.uk/techDB>

Frequently asked questions

For a full list of frequently asked questions and answers please visit the Engineering Council's website: <http://www.engc.org.uk/faq.aspx>

Q: I am a member of an institution and gained my qualifications more than 10 years ago. Can I still be registered?

A: If your academic qualification met the requirements at the time you obtained it, then you will not need to undertake any further study. So if you have a BEng (Hons) degree that was accredited by a professional engineering institution and you started the course before September 1999, you will have met the academic requirements for CEng registration. Similarly, if you hold a Higher National Certificate or Higher National Diploma that meets a specified profile (see higher national awards pdf on right hand side of www.engc.org.uk/courses page) you will have met the academic requirements for IEng registration. For more information on your particular academic qualification please access the accreditation course database www.engc.org.uk/courses.

Q: How much is registration and how do I pay?

A: There are two types of payment: the initial registration fee, and the annual registration subscription. Amounts vary depending on your level of registration, and may be revised annually. Current Engineering Council registration fees can be found at <http://www.engc.org.uk/professional-qualifications/fees> and are paid via the institution with which you are registered. Please contact the relevant institution for methods of payment.

Q: My registration and institution membership has lapsed. How do I renew it?

A: Registration may be reinstated within three years of lapsing by applying to your institution and paying unpaid back fees plus the current year's registration fee. If your registration has lapsed for more than three years, you must reapply to one of the engineering institutions and will be subject to a full professional review.

Q: Can I use my international qualifications to register?

A: Yes. The Engineering Council is the UK signatory to a number of international accords - agreements which provide a mechanism for mutual recognition between signatory bodies of engineering education accreditation processes. Each member of the group of countries involved has expressed its confidence in the Quality Assurance processes of the other countries. By extension this leads to the effective mutual recognition of accredited Engineering Degree courses and, generally, to exemption from the education requirement for practice in each of the signatory countries. Further details can be found on our website www.engc.org.uk, or through the International Engineering Alliance website, www.ieagreements.org.

Q: I have gained a qualification outside the UK. Is there a UK equivalent?

A: Please contact UK-NARIC, the national agency responsible for providing information and advice about how qualifications and skills from overseas compare to the UK's national qualification frameworks.

Q: Does membership of an engineering institution automatically qualify me for registration?

A: No. Institutions offer a variety of membership grades. Some grades enable members to apply for registration, others do not, so please make sure your chosen institution knows you wish to apply for registration. In addition, you will always need to go through the registration assessment process before being registered with the Engineering Council.

Q: Do I need to be a member of a licensed institution or can I register directly with the Engineering Council?

A: The Engineering Council does not offer direct registration. Candidates for registration are required to be in membership of one of the 36 licensed institutions listed on www.engc.org.uk/institutions. There is also the possibility of gaining professional registration through one of the Professional Affiliates if they have a formal agreement with a licensed institution to do so. A list of Professional Affiliates can be found at <http://www.engc.org.uk/about-us/our-partners/professional-affiliates>. Please enquire when contacting the institution of your choice.

Useful weblinks

Benefits of registration: www.engc.org.uk/benefits.aspx

Benefits to employers: www.engc.org.uk/professional-qualifications/benefits-to-business

CEng: www.engc.org.uk/ceng

Engineering Council newsletter: www.engc.org.uk/about-us/register-news

EngTech: www.engc.org.uk/engtech

Guidance on Risk: <http://www.engc.org.uk/risk>

Guidance on Sustainability: www.engc.org.uk/sustainability

ICTTech: www.engc.org.uk/icttech

IEng: www.engc.org.uk/ieng

International recognition of UK Qualifications: www.engc.org.uk/international/

Professional engineering institutions: www.engc.org.uk/institutions

Registration enquiry form: www.engc.org.uk/registration/RegistrationEnquiry.aspx

UK-SPEC: www.engc.org.uk/ukspec

Work-based degree programmes: www.engc.org.uk/engineeringgateways

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