

Myth-Busting the Membership Application Process

The Secretariat's membership team has processed hundreds of applications since the introduction of the competence-assessed application process for higher grades of membership. Here they address some of the most frequently asked questions and misconceptions they come across. So if you are considering upgrading your own membership, or encouraging (or even sponsoring) a colleague to apply, please read on.

1: I don't think I've been working for a sufficient number of years to upgrade

There is no eligibility criteria based on number of years' experience. Use CIEEM's Competency Framework to plan your personal development and understand what is expected of members at the next level of competence. Regular self-assessment, ideally supported by your line manager, will help you to identify the right time to apply to upgrade. When the time comes it is best to start working on your application in your own time rather than under a time pressure later.

2: I don't think I'd be successful with an application to upgrade my membership

It is important that members hold the grade of membership which best reflects their skills and ability, so if you have remained at the same grade for some while then now might be time to start working on your upgrade application. Last year almost 80% of upgrade applications were successful.

3: I don't know who to ask to sponsor my application

For Student applications no sponsor is required, and for our Qualifying grade your sponsor just needs to confirm that the details provided in your application are correct. Sponsors for other grades need to be people best placed to endorse the evidence in your application. It could be an academic tutor, your line manager or a colleague you work alongside. Sponsors are not required to financially support your application.

4: I don't know any CIEEM members to act as my sponsors

Ideally sponsors supporting membership applications should also be CIEEM members but we understand this is not always possible. We therefore do accept non-member sponsors, but we will require you to send in a copy of their CV so that we can verify their suitability to endorse your evidence at that level of competence you are claiming.

5: I've only ever worked in one company so can't find enough support for my application

We understand that the people who know you and your work best are often the colleagues you work alongside each day, and if you have only ever worked for one company, or the same company for a long time, the pool of potential sponsors could be small. Consider the evidence you are providing within your application and approach those who are best placed to endorse your claims. Sponsors are asked to provide supporting statements for each piece of evidence and well written sponsor statements really help to strengthen your application. If your pool of potential sponsors is limited, start by talking through your experience with them before writing

your application to ensure you select examples that best demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the competencies you have identified as your strengths.

6: I cannot find sponsors to endorse every piece of evidence in my application

As long as each of your competency statements are endorsed by at least one of your sponsors, that is ok. On rare occasions we may even allow you to select a third sponsor for a specific piece of evidence. Remember too that you do not have to ask a sponsor who may have supported an earlier application from you to sponsor you again. Ensure you choose people who are best placed to be able to support the evidence you have provided within your current application.

7: My colleagues think that acting as a sponsor is too onerous and they don't have time

Well we do not think it is, but it is also not a responsibility to be taken lightly. As a membership organisation we hope that more experienced members will be willing to support and encourage more junior colleagues to develop their competence, progress in their careers and be recognised for it. Do encourage reluctant sponsors to read the 'Guidance document for sponsors' available online to better understand the role. Consider also when the 'best' time of year might be to approach them and provide as much notice as you can so that they do not feel under pressure.

8: I understand I can only apply in October at the start of the subscription year

We accept applications for membership throughout the year, so you can submit an application at any point when you feel

ready. If you're applying for Chartership you will need to check our website for the latest application submission dates which fall throughout the year.

9: I've heard it can take a long time to receive an outcome

Student and Qualifying applications are processed by the Secretariat and an outcome is provided within four to six

weeks. Competence-assessed grades are reviewed by assessors who are members themselves and act as volunteers. Though they work to deadlines to ensure applications are processed as quickly as possible, given the volume of applications we receive it typically takes around four months for the whole process to be completed. You can help by ensuring your application is completed fully in the first

instance and responding promptly to any requests for additional information. Bear in mind too that assessors have limited availability over the summer months due to work commitments so do plan well ahead when preparing your application, particularly if you are needing it for work or a particular project.