

## Simon Dobson LCGI EngTech MIET MInstLM

### CASE STUDY

*"Being an EngTech proves my competence to my employer and shows them that I have an internationally recognised professional title."*

**Education and qualifications:** Licentiate of the City and Guilds of London Institute (LCGI)

**Which Institution are you a member of:** Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM)

**Grade of membership:** Member

**Current job title:** Electrician

**Company:** Together Housing Association Ltd

**Length in current job:** 13 years

**Please briefly describe your current role and a typical working day**

My key responsibilities are to ensure that electrical installations are safe for use by the general public. I work for a registered social landlord so the majority of these installations are classed as domestic. On a typical working day, I test and inspect electrical installations, identify anything I consider dangerous, rectify the problem and compile a report and supporting documentation. No two days are ever the same and you never really know what to expect.

**What is the greatest challenge you face in your job? What do you most enjoy about it?**

The important thing is to expect the unexpected because every day presents a different challenge. I enjoy the variety and the challenge of applying the standards of today against the standards of days gone by. In the UK, all new electrical installations must comply with the current version of BS7671 (the IET Wiring Regulations), but the majority of installations that I inspect were designed and constructed to previous versions of the Wiring Regulations.

**Please provide a brief outline of your career so far**

I left school with a handful of CSEs and no O Levels. I was fortunate to receive a financial award from the Construction Industry Training Board, which enabled me to study for my Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in Electrical Installation work. I then had a number of short-term jobs that allowed me to further my studies at the local technical college, eventually gaining what in today's terms would be a Level 5 qualification in Electrical Installation.



**What made you choose this career path?**

I had always had an interest in science and technology so when I was about to leave school I was intrigued by a wall chart that I saw about electrical engineering. I saw that the requirements for relevant university courses would require A Levels in mathematics and two sciences. I considered myself not academically gifted in that direction but my school careers advisor suggested that I should go for an Apprenticeship as an electrician. Unfortunately, 1981 was not a good year for seeking an Apprenticeship as the vast majority of companies within the region were making thousands redundant due to a dramatic down turn in industry in general at the time. However, as part of the process of applying for an Apprenticeship I sat the Construction Industry Training Board competency examination and received a financial award, which in today's terms was worth nearly £18,000. This enabled me to begin my studies to become an electrician.

**What spurred you to work towards gaining professional registration as an EngTech?**

I was not aware of the possibility of professional registration until I became involved with the Institution of Electrical Engineers, before it became the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET). Then, about nine years ago the company I work for asked if anyone would like to take any work-related qualifications so I decided to apply for EngTech.

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### How did you become registered as an EngTech?

My employer was helpful. They allowed me two days to fill the relevant forms in, one of which was about ten pages long and asked for all sorts of information. My previous work experience since leaving school had been quite varied so it took a little time to find relevant examples in my career to provide as evidence of the various competencies. I also had to find a couple of referees. At the time I was a member of the IET West Yorkshire Local Network Committee, so I approached the Committee Chair and the Secretary and they were quite happy to be my referees. At that time a professional registration interview was required, so I arranged to have mine in Doncaster and it was then just a matter of waiting for the process to run its course. My registration was duly published in The Telegraph and I received my certificate from the Engineering Council shortly afterwards.

### How has achieving EngTech benefitted your career?

I believe achieving registration as an EngTech has benefitted my career in a number of ways. It has set me apart from other technicians and being an EngTech proves my competence to my employer and shows them that I have an internationally recognised professional title.

### What advice would you give someone considering professional registration as an EngTech?

If the thought of applying for registration seems daunting, I would reassure them that the process is straightforward. It is just a matter of approaching each competency requirement in the context of what you actually do on a daily basis. I would recommend that anyone interested in applying should do so, they will not be disappointed.

### What is your employer's attitude? Were they supportive while you were working towards professional registration as an EngTech?

My employer was very supportive, allowing me the time I needed to complete the necessary forms and attend my professional registration interview. It would have been quite hard to do this without their assistance.

### How does your employer benefit from you being professionally registered?

Employees who are professionally registered stand out because their employer knows that they have undergone a thorough independent assessment of their skills, competence and commitment and been found to meet an internationally recognised standard.

### What are your future goals?

My future goals are to progress to Incorporated Engineer (IEng) and perhaps onwards to Chartered Engineer (CEng). More recently, I have become involved with the IET as a Schools Liaison Officer on the West Yorkshire Local Network Committee, which keeps me busy. I am committed to the Institution's vision, mission and values.

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