

Dr M Crina A Oltean-Dumbrava MSc MA PhD CEng FICE MRICS MCI0B

Dr Crina Oltean-Dumbrava is a highly competent Chartered Civil Engineer, Chartered Builder and a Chartered Surveyor. Her rare combination of professional expertise, coupled with two masters degrees and a doctorate spanning the construction and economics disciplines, provides her with unique perspectives across several built environment and education disciplines. In 2003 Crina was appointed Senior Lecturer in Asset and Construction Management at the University of Bradford, where she is also a member of Senate. She became registered as a Chartered Engineer in 2007.

I am most proud of my Chartered Engineer qualification and of being a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers. Such a position commands respect and distinction, due to: the external independent assessment required in order to qualify; the high standard of professional competence set by the Engineering Council; and the national and international prestige and recognition of the title Chartered Engineer.

The perception among many academics is that if they do not have industrial experience and have not worked on major projects in the industry, they cannot provide the necessary evidence to demonstrate their competence. This is not true. Any active academic researcher who is involved in research or Knowledge Transfer projects can demonstrate their competence, even if they have no industrial experience. However, what they need to have are proficient industrial mentors to guide them through the process.

Whilst I had industrial experience as a site and project manager and as a site engineer at the beginning of my career, I did not use this to demonstrate my competence. Instead, I used a recent research project and applied through the Technical Report option. I was also fortunate to have outstanding mentors. The then Chair of our Civil Engineering Industrial Advisory Board and another member of the Board both kindly offered their considerable support. Under their excellent guidance I was able to use research funded by EPSRC as the illustration to demonstrate my competence.

My route to chartered status started some 30 years ago in Romania where I qualified as an engineer and proceeded to manage the construction of several projects, among which was a complex chemical engineering plant.



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However, I was drawn to the teaching profession and was appointed Lecturer at the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania where I was able to pursue my interest in teaching and research.

In 1995, I moved to Scotland and was appointed to the University of Abertay Dundee. During the last 15 years I have focussed primarily on sustainable construction research. Being multi-lingual I am able to manage international research projects in the field and have developed international Masters courses, and supervised doctorates in the UK and in mainland Europe. I am a prolific writer of academic papers and have been invited to present my research findings to audiences across the globe.

Becoming registered as a Chartered Engineer has strengthened my links with the industry by providing more credentials to my professional knowledge. It has also provided me with opportunities to work closer with the industry on several research and Knowledge Transfer projects, as well as being involved in contributing to the activity of the Built Environment Skills Alliance Higher Education Strategy Delivery Group, and of the ConstructionSkills' Skills Provision Steering Committee.

In 2008 I was appointed the first woman chair of the Association of Civil Engineering Departments (ACED); a body representing 53 UK universities offering civil engineering courses. I am a member of various international organisations including the Association of Women in Science and Engineering, and have acted as a consultant to several major engineering companies. In 2009 I was elected to the Joint Board of Moderators visiting panel. All these activities require a strong partnership with industry.

My goals are to further enhance these activities, to bring the partnership between academia and the industry even closer. I will also continue to motivate and inspire our students to aspire to becoming a Chartered Engineer and seek professional membership of the four institutions that are represented in the Joint Board of Moderators. I encourage all my sandwich course students to register because it provides a year of placement in the industry. In certain instances, this year contributes towards becoming professionally qualified with the Engineering Council and provides the crucial foundation to a stimulating career as a Chartered Engineer.

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