



Initial Professional Development Policy Statement

IPD refers to the period when an individual is developing the knowledge, understanding and skill, and professional attitude required for professional registration. It may take place through structured graduate or new entrant schemes, or it may be self-managed. However it is undertaken, IPD should offer engineering professionals opportunities to put their underpinning knowledge into practice in the workplace, and to gain experience in a variety of settings. IPD is distinct from dedicated 'further learning' training schemes that focus on building underpinning knowledge, though IPD and further learning may be integrated in some schemes.

PEIs provide support for individuals undertaking self-managed IPD. This may include arranging mentoring, or providing applicants for registration with the tools to record IPD.

Accreditation of structured IPD schemes

Structured IPD schemes enable an individual to develop the competences in UK-SPEC¹ and the *ICTTech* standard, and encourage the planning and recording of professional development, leading to lifelong CPD. They may include mentoring, placements with an employer, career development frameworks, and recording systems.

The professional engineering institutions (PEIs) may hold a licence from the Engineering Council to approve or accredit learning and development of different types, including structured IPD schemes. IPD schemes differ greatly, as each is designed to meet the needs of the employer. However, all accredited IPD schemes will have clear objectives which satisfy the standards of competence and commitment set out in UK-SPEC and the *ICTTech* standard. Accredited IPD must provide assessment and certification of achievement, and have the support of senior and line management. The value of accredited IPD is in how it offers individuals opportunities to develop towards professional registration and encourages recording of evidence for Professional Review.

Accreditation assessors visit one or more locations where the scheme is delivered or administered. Where the same scheme is delivered at multiple sites, copies of examples of assessment and certification materials shall be examined as part of the process. Locations visited should be representative of an individual's experience. Conversations with assessors and candidates should form part of the accreditation process; these may be conducted remotely if the scheme is delivered at multiple sites. The employer should demonstrate that systems are in place to ensure individuals receive consistent support if they are moving between sites.

¹ <http://engc.org.uk/ukspec>

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Joint visits are appropriate where an employer is seeking accreditation from more than one Licensed Member. However, accreditation shall not be jointly granted; each Licensed Member shall make a decision to grant or renew accreditation on its own.

The duration of accreditation is decided by the Licensed Member but shall be no longer than five years. Where re-accreditation is undertaken jointly, the participating PEIs may agree to delegate the visit among themselves. However, PEIs delegating visits must ensure they remotely obtain evidence from candidates each time through online or paper-based communications. A visit to re-accredit a particular IPD scheme may not be delegated to another PEI twice successively.

Accreditation of IPD schemes may not be an exclusive agreement, and must not preclude the employer or its employees from working with other PEIs for implementation and assessment of IPD.

The Engineering Council supports IPD accreditation by sharing good practice among the PEIs holding appropriate licenses, including an annual Professional Development Forum for the PEIs.