

Assessment 1. Professional Skills and Health & Safety in Construction

Essay. Professional Body Registration

Report to Managing Director and Personal Development Plan

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1. Introduction

I am currently employed as an apprentice project manager within the built environment, at our Swansea office. I am ambitious and would like to progress my involvement with a professional body. I am already a Student Member of the Association of Project Management (APM), my goal is to become a Full Member and Chartered Project Professional (ChPP), (APM, 2021).

Professional body resources, like Continual Professional Development (CPD), are vital to my progression, alongside expert advice and guidance, they allow me to further my career and become a more knowledgeable and capable professional (Megginson, 2007). Such big career milestones cannot be achieved alone, they can only be achieved with support from my company and, as such, I am writing this report to highlight to you the benefits, not only to myself but to colleagues and the company as a whole.

2. Professional Bodies in the Built Environment

Professional bodies are dedicated to the advancement of the knowledge and practice of professions through developing, supporting, regulating and promoting professional standards for technical and ethical competence. Professional bodies are concerned with the public benefit as well as the reputation of professionals. They aim to maintain and develop professionalism, thereby securing high quality professional services for society. There are over 400 professional bodies in the UK. Together, they represent 13 million professionals. The largest and most popular in the built environment are; The Institution of Civil Engineers or The Chartered Institute of Building (Gov.List, 2021).

Many professional bodies have a Royal Charter, this is an instrument of incorporation, granted by The Queen, which confers independent legal personality on an organisation and defines its objectives, constitution and powers to govern its own affairs. Some Charters have within them the power to award Individual Chartered designations, as does the APM.

3. Chartership in the Built Environment

Attaining Chartership is a formal recognition of a particular level of competence in a professional field, it demonstrates to employers and clients that individuals have had competence independently assessed, credentials verified, and have made a commitment to CPD. They have been judged by their peers to be working at the highest possible standard within their profession. Beyond this, professional registration also benefits employers and the profession as a whole, demonstrating the individual's skills, knowledge and experience to clients and the wider public.

In terms of standing in the job market, membership of a professional body is desirable in most sectors. Climbing through the professional hierarchy, which varies from body to body, is vital for both growth and improvement. The APM requires a vigorous application process to become a ChPP, like most other bodies, it is often the pinnacle or highlight of a career. Chartership stands as a distinguishing factor for top professionals.

4. Influences to Professional Structures

Aside from the personal and employer drivers for professional growth, the built environment is also influenced by the public, the government, the market and, of course, environmental matters.

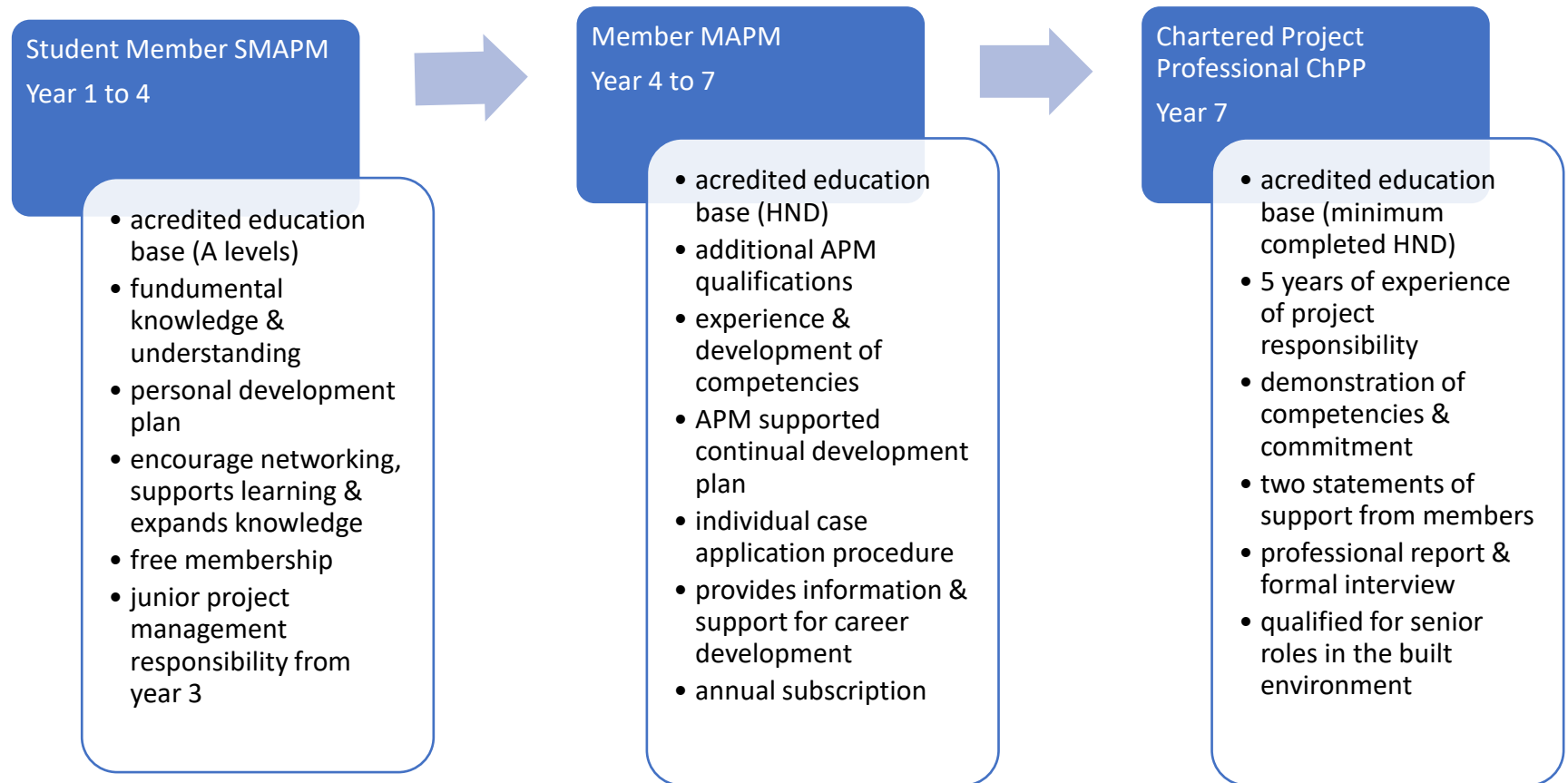
It has always been accepted that positions of responsibility within the built environment should be undertaken by only those competent to do so, although perhaps not controlled as well as it should have been. The 2017 Grenfell Tower disaster was a catalyst for government reforms. We will soon see this clearly set out by law in the new Building Safety Bill and the building regulations that will follow (Gov.Competence, 2021). These new regulations will impose a requirement on Principal Designers, Principal Contractors and anyone carrying out any design or building work to be competent for their roles. The government is working with the British Standards Institution to create a suite of national competence standards. It is anticipated that professional bodies will play a big part in these reforms by offering assurances of the competency levels of their members.

Despite interference from the coronavirus pandemic the built environment industry continues to grow, contributing £100 billion per year to the UK economy, that's 7% of total GDP. It offers 2.9 million jobs, circa 10% of all jobs, in over 280,000 businesses. The UK has the sixth largest green construction sector in the world, with climate change initiatives growing and major focus on sustainability (ONS, 2021)

It stands to reason that the near future will present many opportunities for companies upholding professional standards and lead by chartered professionals. Their industry knowledge and experience render them best equipped to tackle these pressing issues.

5. Route to Chartered Project Professional with the Association of Project Managers

This is the route I am following and the timeline I anticipate.



6. Benefits of Professional Body Membership. Table 1.

Benefits to	Benefits
Myself	• A ready-made framework for my development. • Recognised international qualifications. • More authority in the colleague hierarchy. • Access to further knowledge & qualifications. • Access to a network of top experienced professionals. • Access to quality, built environment media in the form of blogs, news articles, books and seminars. • Better industry understanding, leading to more efficient & effective work.
The Company	• Attracting the best talent by actively supporting professionalism. • Assurance for clients of high standards & ethical practice. • Connections & opportunities through myself with people whom I have communicated with from the network of APM. • Setting industry standards & being favoured to other companies & the public, being revered as having high standards & highly regarded employees.
Co-Workers	• Assistance to co-workers with information, support & advice on latest industry methods & techniques. • Higher standard of co-workers due to a more prestigious & knowledgeable environment. • Better working environment due to access to leadership knowledge thus improving workplace morale.
Others	• The public can be assured of professionalism, high standards & ethical practice in the built environment. • Better quality of professionals will promote better, safer & greener services to society in general.

7. Improving the Health and Safety Records of the Company

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) recorded that around 2.9% of workers in the built environment suffered from an injury, year to march 2021. This rate is statistically significantly higher than that for workers across all industries, which have a mean of 1.7%. There has been a downward trend over the past ten years, although there was no significant change to the past two years, it is believed that the pandemic has reduced data accuracy. There is need for improvement (HSE stats, 2021).

The Construction Design Management Regulations 2015 recognise the importance of quality senior staff in the built environment, the health and safety responsibilities of professionals are clearly identified. Of late, the HSE have further recognised a direct correlation between improved training and improved safety. The HSE website provides access to guidance and studies that indicate the positive effects of the presence of higher quality knowledgeable operatives, good leadership is now clearly identified as a key to continued improvement. e.g.; HSE Guidance: Leading and Managing for Health and Safety (HSE Guidance, 2021).

The built environment is under constant pressure to improve, in doing so it becomes an increasingly complicated workplace, health and safety incidents born out of confusion and inexperience are becoming more prevalent.

The well informed and up to date professional is best placed to ensure compliance to and the continual improvement of safety standards in the company.

8. Personal Development Plan. Table 2

Professional progression with the APM is mapped out within their Competence Framework, there are 27 competencies that are needed to achieve ChPP. Six of those are tabled below (APM, 2021).

Name: Benjamin Jeffs					
Job role and responsibilities: Apprentice Project Manager					
Review of learning needs			Development plan		
Ref	In what area do I need to improve my performance?	What do I need to learn in order to achieve this?	What will I do to achieve this?	What are the likely resources & support that I will need?	How will I evaluate a successful outcome?
1	Document organisation skills.	Industry techniques, company procedures & general company knowledge regarding filing & documentation.	My role in project management means I must learn to incorporate this into my routine daily.	Daily help from colleagues. Access to company filing systems. Educational, interactive videos via the company intranet.	Visibly better organisation & ability to locate documents. Also, successful outcomes to annual quality audits.
2	Group communications.	More precise & confident vocabulary in meetings & emails.	Distribute a weekly toolbox talk amongst employees as well as lead presentations when possible.	Advice from my line manager & access to company systems.	Requested feedback from group via itemised agenda topic at monthly project reviews.
3	Team management.	The ability to select, develop & manage teams.	Bring people together, motivate, co-ordinate & develop the team to achieve specified objectives that cannot be realised individually.	Guidance & support from my line manager & colleagues. A pro-active engaging team.	Line manager & colleagues' feedback via itemised agenda topic at monthly project reviews. A visibly more motivated and committed team.

4	Leadership.	How to empower & inspire others to deliver successful outcomes.	Gain experience & education in what makes a good leader. Practice whenever given the opportunity.	Aside from my on-the-job learning, undertake further APM leadership training modules.	Positive company monthly project performance statistics & managers appraisal.
5	Resource capacity planning.	Effective & efficient management of time, money & other resources.	In daily project activities, focus on efficient use of resources by optimising the alignment of resource demand & availability.	Support from my line manager & colleagues. Access to company systems.	Positive company monthly project performance statistics.
6	Professionalism.	Demonstrate skills, knowledge & experience to clients, my co-workers & the wider public.	Be conscientious & attentive at my place of work, study well & be active within the APM.	Use the resources available to myself as a member of the APM, assistance from colleagues & university lecturers.	Measure my general progress in my CPD. Analyse annual progress reports from my company training manager.

9. Conclusion

Professional bodies provide society with a gauge for the respectability of professionals. Membership provides many benefits to the individual, the employer, co-workers and the public. They provide a recognised logical structure for personal improvement as well as the support that is needed to achieve this. The improvement of safety in the built environment needs high quality professionals. Increasing demands on the built environment, from compliance to legislation, market forces and the green drive all indicate a greater demand for professionals. I hope that the company agrees to support me on this journey.

10. List of References

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(Gov. Competence, 2021), Government Guidance - Industry competence: factsheet, Updated 8 November 2021 available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-safety-bill-factsheets/industry-competence-factsheet>

(Gov. Prof. Org, 2021), Approved professional organisations and learned societies available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/professional-bodies-approved-for-tax-relief-list-3/approved-professional-organisations-and-learned-societies>

(HSE Guidance, 2021), Health and safety in the construction industry available at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/index.htm>

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