



**IEMA Guide to preparing a
Professional Development Plan for
Full Membership**

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Version 1.0

1.0 Introduction

The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) recognises the importance of planning professional development for both individuals and organisations. The environmental profession has a clearly defined professional qualification structure, provided by the IEMA, to support individuals as they progress through their environmental careers. This professional development support guide is designed to provide individuals with a gap analysis tool to plan their professional development, information on how individuals can demonstrate that they meet the Full membership criteria and suggestions and guidance on filling any gaps in knowledge, understanding or experience. Whether you are at the start of your career or a senior environmental professional you can use this guide to help plan your professional development and work towards IEMA Full membership.

Full Membership of the IEMA is a well regarded professional standard of *knowledge, understanding and experience* in the fields of environmental management and assessment. The assessment for Full Membership entails a written application and an interview with two Full membership Assessors. Successful candidates are entitled to use the suffix MIEMA.

There are three areas of competence are key to Full Membership:

1. Knowledge and Understanding
2. Application of Knowledge and Understanding
3. Communication Skills – Internal and External

Essentially, candidates are required to demonstrate that they meet the Standards of Competence Criteria for Full Membership. They are applicable to a broad range of professionals for example, environmental managers, environmental impact assessment practitioners, environmental auditors, local agenda 21 officers and academics.

Through professional development members can work towards Full Membership by reviewing and identifying where further knowledge or experience is required. Members can then plan actions in order that the necessary skills or knowledge is acquired. This should be followed by an evaluation of if the need has been met and your ability to demonstrate this, either through knowledge or practical examples of experience. The form below is designed to help you to identify any gaps in knowledge and understanding and provide you with a variety of methods for gaining the skills required.

The form lists the Full Membership criteria in the left hand column – click on the criteria to see some examples of experiences that would be relevant. In the second column, suggested methods of gaining knowledge or skills are included (in brief), additional guidance on suggestions in column two is included in Appendix I. The third column requires you to identify a means of achieving the required knowledge or experience. This can be achieved through a variety of methods. To help you further, the IEMA has provided explanatory information on the Full membership criteria (Appendix II) – some examples of experience that would be considered relevant. The fourth column requires you to identify a target date for achieving your development need; this date should be realistic and achievable.

Professional Development Planner

Name:

Organisation:

	Suggested / Possible Actions	Personal action required to achieve	Target date
I. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING			
I.1 SCOPE: A Full Member must:			
<p>A. have an extensive and forward looking knowledge and understanding of fundamental environmental and sustainability principles</p> <p>B. be able to see beyond strict legislative compliance and, through a broad understanding of environmental principles and environmental effects, anticipate environmental trends</p> <p>C. be able to demonstrate how he/she maintains knowledge and understanding of environmental issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy documents, e.g. DEFRA sustainable development strategy • Training • Knowledge sharing • Monitor environmental trends • Keeping up to date • Networking 		
I.2 COMPETENCE: A Full Member of the IEMA is expected to have the ability to:			
<p>A. explain the critical importance of maintaining and enhancing natural cycles and biodiversity in achieving sustainability</p> <p>B. identify and analyse short, medium and longer term environmental threats and opportunities (in relation to the organisation/industry) in terms of the goal of sustainability</p> <p>C. understand why the environmental global threats (above) are of importance at the local level</p> <p>D. identify opportunities for environmental improvement or mitigation and recognise their dynamic nature</p> <p>E. recognise the interdisciplinary nature of environmental issues</p> <p>F. recognise the importance of effective resource use and recovery for the goal of sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Networking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ with individuals from different sectors to broaden knowledge and understanding ○ to understand threats and opportunities in other sectors ○ to understand different sectors and the problems / issues they face, consider how you would approach the problems of other sectors • Work placements / Secondments • Developing strategic thinking • Provide examples of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ actions you have taken or proposed to improve performance or mitigate environmental impacts ○ process improvements, e.g. improvements in energy efficiency, technological change 		

2. APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING			
2.1 SCOPE: A Full Member must:			
<p><u>A. be able to put environmental issues into his/her professional context</u></p> <p><u>B. demonstrate how he/she applies their knowledge and understanding in practice in accordance with the Code of Practice</u></p> <p><u>C. approach work in a professional manner and work towards and secure change and improvements for a sustainable future</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward thinking • Review the Code of Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ how will this would influence your day to day activities? ○ what measures are currently in place to ensure that you abide by the Code of Practice? ○ challenge practice that breaches the Code of Practice ○ encourage professional development of others • Provide examples 		
2.2 COMPETENCE: A Full Member of the IEMA is expected to have:			
<p><u>A. the ability to contribute to sustainability through their application of knowledge and understanding</u></p> <p><u>B. the ability to develop and communicate an environmental business case in a professional manner</u></p> <p><u>C. the willingness and persistence to address difficult environmental issues</u></p> <p><u>D. the ability to evaluate the nature of a problem from an environmental perspective and develop and communicate practical sustainable solutions</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Networking • Providing evidence / examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare a paper or report for use internally or externally ○ Initiate an action and consider the appropriate communication method and levers you would use to secure change ○ an example from work or outside work, e.g. involvement with voluntary groups, local committees 		

3. COMMUNICATION SKILLS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL			
3.1 SCOPE: A Full Member must:			
<p>A. <u>have the necessary skills to liaise with and positively advise and influence others with respect to environmental issues and effects</u></p> <p>B. <u>possess leadership and motivational skills to ensure that good environmental practice is effectively communicated and integrated into decisions and actions</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge sharing • Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Informative training (inside or outside of work) ○ Coaching for colleagues • Provide examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ actions taken to influence others, e.g. encouraging recycling, promoting car sharing or the use of public transport ○ take the lead and develop initiatives ○ direct individuals to useful resources ○ encourage individuals to develop ideas and initiatives 		
3.2 COMPETENCE: A Full Member of the IEMA has the ability to:			
<p>A. <u>identify, engage with and respond to an appropriate range of stakeholders</u></p> <p>B. <u>develop effective means with which to liaise with and advise others</u></p> <p>C. <u>promote a positive environmental culture and move towards sustainability</u></p> <p>D. <u>identify measures to ensure that individuals and organisations are accountable and understand their responsibilities for both environmental damage and improvement</u></p> <p>E. <u>influence others to improve their understanding of environmental and sustainability issues and improve performance to fulfil their responsibilities</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Networking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify stakeholders and consider how you engage them ○ Work with stakeholders to improve environmental knowledge and understanding • Knowledge sharing • Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be involved in community / projects outside of work where your knowledge and skills can be shared and developed ○ Encourage others to engage in professional development and training 		

Appendix I: Additional guidance on suggested / possible actions

- **Reading (Full list of useful information sources is available from www.iema.net)**
 - Corporate environmental reports, Corporate sustainability reports and environmental statements
 - Government policy documents
 - Consultation documents
 - Environmental Press, e.g. The Environmentalist which includes a policy update, ENDS, Sustain Magazine,
 - Website information
 - www.iema.net
 - www.emas.org.uk
 - www.environment-agency.gov.uk
 - www.netregs.gov.uk
 - www.defra.gov.uk
- **Networking**
 - Attend regional events, conferences, seminars to broaden knowledge and understanding, particularly problems faced by other sectors
 - Liaise with peers
- **Training (receiving and providing)**
 - Undertake training courses to fill gaps or broaden knowledge or understanding
 - Short / CPD courses
 - Distance learning courses
 - Degree / Masters / Diploma courses
 - Seminars
 - Organise “coaching” from colleagues on a particular subject area
 - Provide training to colleagues and other groups, e.g. school or community group to raise awareness
- **Work placements / Secondments**
 - Undertake voluntary work or participate in voluntary groups, e.g. local or other committees / panels
 - Undertake a secondment or placement in another department or role
- **Research**
 - If you are going to research areas always use reputable sources for information
 - Books
 - Websites
 - Published research papers
- **Maintaining / broadening knowledge and understanding / keeping up to date / monitoring environmental trends**
 - Legislation: Keeping up to date
 - Subscribe to an electronic update (free ones available)
 - Subscribe to other manuals that are updated quarterly, e.g. GEE Compliance Manual
 - Write a paper or article on a *best practice* issue for a magazine

- Involvement
 - Observe specialists, e.g. observe an environmental audit
 - Use the Associate Open Book questions to broaden knowledge
 - Keep abreast of “hot topics”, e.g. producer responsibility
 - Break down problems into constituent parts
 - Establish practical solutions
 - Be up to date on initiatives such as the GRI (Global Reporting Initiative)
 - General press, OECD Journal, UNEP and WBCSD (world Business Council on Sustainable Development)
- **Knowledge sharing**
 - Communication methods – what is effective?
 - What actions would you like to take and how would you persuade management that the action is necessary?
 - Provide training for others to encourage more environmentally sustainable practices
 - Write briefings or articles to share knowledge
- **Developing strategic thinking - bigger picture issues / forward thinking**
 - Review local environmental action plans and consider how these contribute to the bigger picture
 - Develop logical arguments to facilitate change
 - Contribute to a working group or steering group that directs or influences policy
 - Read Government strategy documents and think about the implications for industry and the environment
- **Providing examples**
 - Prior to the assessment think about examples that clearly demonstrate how you personally meet the standards of competence criteria for Full Membership, e.g. think of a difficult issue that you have addressed and how you went about persuading people that it was the right choice
 - Examples can be drawn from experiences both at work and in any voluntary activities outside of work

Appendix II: Explanation of the Full membership Criteria

I. Knowledge and Understanding

I.1 Scope: a Full Member must:

A. have an extensive and forward looking knowledge and understanding of fundamental environmental and sustainability principles

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Describe the relationship between economic, social and environmental issues.*
- *Understand the need for natural resource, ecosystem and biosphere protection.*
- *Understand the need to create sustainable communities – places where people want to live and work, now and in the future.*
- *Understand the need for sustainable consumption and production and the requirement to achieve more with less.*
- *Knowledge of national, social, human, physical and financial interaction*

B. be able to see beyond strict legislative compliance and, through a broad understanding of environmental principles and environmental effects, anticipate environmental trends

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Promote environmental improvement throughout their organisations, their organisation's customer and supplier networks.*
- *Identify future environmental trends and take a proactive approach to forecasting the effect(s) on organisations and individuals.*

C. be able to demonstrate how he/she maintains knowledge and understanding of environmental issues

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Provide examples of publications read, locations visited, events/meetings attended to improve knowledge and understanding.*
- *Preparing a professional development plan/continuing professional development plan to demonstrate how knowledge and understanding is maintained and improved.*

I.2 Competence: a Full Member of the IEMA is expected to have the ability to:

A. explain the critical importance of maintaining and enhancing natural cycles and biodiversity in achieving sustainability

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Identify links between natural resource degradation, ecosystems, habitat destruction and extinction of species.*
- *Understand important natural cycles (hydrological, carbon etc) and the potential impact of people and organisations on them*

B. identify and analyse short, medium and longer term environmental threats and opportunities (in relation to the organisation/industry) in terms of the goal of sustainability

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Identify and agree appropriate environmental assessment methodologies (which might include Life Cycle Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment).*
- *Use imagination, creativity and innovation to evaluate products and services that support the principles of sustainable development.*

C. understand why the environmental global threats (above) are of importance at the local level

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Identify global environmental issues and define how they can impact at a local level.*
- *Explain how local activities impact on the global environment.*

D. identify opportunities for environmental improvement or mitigation and recognise their dynamic nature

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Examples of environmental improvement measures you have initiated or implemented.*
- *Preparing a report or proposal to implement an improvement measure or mitigation.*

E. recognise the interdisciplinary nature of environmental issues

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Understand how environmental management and impact assessment issues integrate with other business issues.*
- *Understand how different aspects of the environment are affected by businesses, society and industry.*
- *Understand how different environmental media interact.*

F. recognise the importance of effective resource use and recovery for the goal of sustainability

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Understand the need for natural resource protection.*
- *Understand the critical role that fossil fuel consumption plays in environmental degradation and economic progress.*
- *Understand the need for sustainable consumption and production and the requirement to achieve more with less.*

2. Application of Knowledge and Understanding

2.1 Scope: a Full Member must:

A. be able to put environmental issues into his/her professional context

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Understand which environmental issues are pertinent to your organisation and industry.*
- *Understand future issues that will be facing your particular organisation and industry.*
- *Understand current environmental legislation and anticipate its future direction.*
- *Demonstrate how future possible legislation might influence current decision-making.*
- *Anticipate possible environmental change and predict possible consequences.*

B. demonstrate how he/she applies their knowledge and understanding in practice in accordance with the Code of Practice

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Identify the limits of own personal knowledge and skills.*
- *Plan and record CPD (Continuing Professional Development) activities.*

C. approach work in a professional manner and work towards and secure change and improvements for a sustainable future

2.2 Competence: a Full Member of the IEMA is expected to have:

A. the ability to contribute to sustainability through their application of knowledge and understanding

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Examples of measures that you have initiated or implemented to contribute to sustainability, e.g. resource use efficiency (examples can include both professional and personal examples).*

B. the ability to develop and communicate an environmental business case in a professional manner

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Contribute to, chair and record meetings and discussions.*
- *Developing win/win solutions.*
- *Prepare procedures, letters, documents and reports.*
- *Exchange information and provide advice to colleagues.*
- *Engage with a wider audience by writing articles / guidelines / books etc.*

C. the willingness and persistence to address difficult environmental issues

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Examples of how you have or would pursue a difficult environmental issue to secure progress. This could be an environmental issue at work or through voluntary activity.*

D. the ability to evaluate the nature of a problem from an environmental perspective and develop and communicate practical sustainable solutions

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Develop and evaluate opportunities and constraints for continuous environmental improvement.*
- *Identify the required cost, quality, safety, reliability, appearance, fitness for purpose and environmental impact of changes and improvements.*
- *Identify life cycle issues of products, services and activities to understand life cycle impacts and develop practical sustainable solutions.*
- *Actively learn from feedback on results to improve environmental outcomes and establish best practice.*
- *Undertake reviews of own development needs.*
- *Prepare and evaluate action plans to meet personal and organisational objectives.*

3. Communication Skills – Internal and External

3.1 Scope: a Full Member must:

A. have the necessary skills to liaise with and positively advise and influence others with respect to environmental issues and effects

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Actively learn from feedback on results to improve future environmental solutions and build best practice.*
- *Negotiate the necessary contractual arrangements with other stakeholders (workforce, client, subcontractors, suppliers, etc).*
- *Encourage others to understand the wider environmental picture, e.g. throughout a product's life cycle.*
- *Provide leadership ensuring development is carried out in a sustainable manner.*

B. ensure that good environmental practice is effectively communicated and integrated into decisions and actions

3.2 Competence: A Full Member of the IEMA has the ability to:

A. identify, engage with and respond to an appropriate range of stakeholders

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Be aware of the needs and concerns of others.*
- *Form and maintain productive working relationships with others to inform and advise them.*
- *Understand and encourage stakeholder involvement and be accountable to them.*

B. develop effective means with which to liaise with and advise others

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Organise and lead work teams, coordinating project activities.*

- *Provide feedback to colleagues and recommend improvements.*
- *Present conclusions of environmental debates clearly and concisely when consulted.*

C. promote a positive environmental culture and move towards sustainability

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Identify and influence users' expectations and opportunities for environmental improvement.*
- *Assess marketing needs and contribute to marketing strategies.*
- *Identify constraints and exploit opportunities for the development and transfer of technology within own chosen field and into other areas.*
- *Promote new environmental applications and /or solutions when appropriate.*
- *Influence others to promote behavior and culture change.*

D. identify measures to ensure that individuals and organisations are accountable and understand their responsibilities for both environmental damage and improvement

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Comply with the IEMA Code of Practice.*
- *Promote and engage /comply with environmental reporting and disclosure within limits of client confidentiality.*
- *Work constructively within relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks, including social and employment legislation*
- *Ensure that variations from environmental standards, improvement programmes and budgets are identified, and that corrective action is taken.*

E. influence others to improve their understanding of environmental and sustainability issues and improve performance to fulfil their responsibilities

Some examples of how this could be demonstrated are:

- *Motivate others - agree objectives and work plans with teams and individuals.*
- *Identify team and individual needs, and plan for their development.*
- *Assess team and individual performance, and provide feedback.*
- *Mentor and support others in the work place.*