

Applying for Registered Assessor Membership



■ Introduction

Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership of the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment (IEMA) provides a clear indication of those organisations that are capable of producing Environmental Statements (ES) in accordance with current best practice standards. It is a status which reflects ability in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) work and is awarded on the basis of a measure of the quality of work produced by an organisation.

Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership is awarded for a period of 3 years, after which an organisation must apply for renewal. Registered status is therefore maintained on the basis of a company's current ability in the field of EIA. This information sheet provides a summary of the procedure for organisations applying for Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership.

■ Benefits of Registered Membership

The benefits of Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership include:

- an independent measure of the organisation's ability to produce good quality Environmental Statements;
- demonstration to potential clients of the organisation's ability to produce good quality Environmental Statements;
- significant marketing prestige and a competitive advantage when bidding for EIA work;
- discounts on Professional Indemnity Insurance;
- use of IEMA Registered Assessor Logo and declaration of Registered Membership status on your letterhead and other publicity material; and
- identification of an organisation's Registered Membership status on IEMA referral lists.

■ Who can apply?

Only Assessor Members of the Institute can apply for Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership. The organisation must be able to submit an Environmental Statement (ES) which they have wholly or mainly been responsible for producing. The ES must have been produced within an 18 month period preceding the date of the application. Please note all ESs received undergo a screening process upon arrival to ensure they comply with this criteria.

NB: When considering which piece of work to submit for review, applicants should study the Institute's Review Criteria to determine whether the submission is likely to meet the requirements of these criteria. Please contact IEMA if you require further clarification on the type of work to be submitted; however please note IEMA cannot advise on the likelihood of a particular piece of work meeting the requirements of Registered Membership.

Submission of environmental assessment work is not restricted to work carried out within the UK, however all the requirements of the Institute's Review Criteria will be applied in all cases.

■ How can my organisation apply for Registered Membership?

If you do not already have an application form, you can obtain one from IEMA. Alternatively download an application form from our website www.iema.net. On this form you should provide details of your organisation and the work you are submitting as part of your application.

Upon receipt of the ES and application form, IEMA will issue a request for payment for the fee. Please note work on the application will not begin until the fee has been paid. All organisations are required to pay the basic application fee, regardless of whether IEMA has previously reviewed the ES, eg. for a Local Authority. An additional fee may be charged for reviewing ESs which are excessively long on the following basis:

- where the documents that are essential to read in full (generally the main document and Non Technical Summary) equate to more than 350 pages the charge for additional pages is made at our discounted members rate.

IEMA considers it is important that the Registered status of an organisation reflects its current capability in the field of EIA. Registered membership must therefore be renewed every 3 years, with the submission of a new example of work which has been undertaken in the 18 month period preceding the renewal application.

■ What happens to my application?

Once a complete application has been submitted, the example of EIA work provided will be put through IEMA's normal review procedures. The documents will be reviewed by at least two members of the Institute's technical staff, or one Institute staff member and a Council member, against the Institute Review Criteria (Appendix 1). In addition, IEMA may seek a specialist input to the review from external experienced advisors.

An overall grade for the ES will not be awarded. However, component sections of the review will be graded A-F in accordance with IEMA Review Criteria. The application for Registered Membership will be rejected where the review report grades **ANY** component section as D, E or F or has less than 6 of the 12 components graded A or B.

If the review grades any component section as D, E or F or has less than 6 of the 12 components graded A or B, a draft review report will be forwarded to the applicant for comment. This will provide the applicant with an opportunity to eliminate any inaccuracies in the report, not to agree the wording. The applicant will be provided with a period of 2 months to respond. If no response is received IEMA will assume the applicant accepts the content of the review. During this 2 month period the applicant may choose to withdraw their application. If an application for renewal is withdrawn, the applicant will lose their Registered status. Applicants can submit a new application after 6 months from the date the previous application was withdrawn.

Once the review has been completed, the application and the review report will be submitted to IEMA'S Technical Sub-committee, who will then consider whether the application should be approved. You will be informed of the Committee's decision by a member of IEMA'S Technical Team.

As the Institute Council meets on a quarterly basis, and applications for Registered Membership must take second priority to some other Institute reviews, e.g. those linked to current planning applications, the time taken to process a Registered Membership application can be up to 6 months.

■ **What about the result?**

Successful applicants will be informed in writing and provided with a copy of the review and a certificate of Registered Membership status. The date of your organisation's registration will be from the date of the Council meeting at which your application was approved. Organisations are required to renew their Registered Membership status every 3 years and are required to submit their renewal 6 months in advance of the renewal date. Renewals will be dealt with in the same way as the original application.

In the event that your application is not successful, you will be informed in writing and provided with a copy of the review. You do have the right to appeal against the decision of the Council, but the appeal must be submitted within one month of the date of the letter informing your organisation of the result of the application. Alternatively, you can submit a new application for Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership after 6 months has elapsed since the date of the Council's decision.

■ **Any further questions**

If you require any further information on applying for Registered Environmental Impact Assessor Membership, please contact the Technical Team, IEMA at the following address:

**Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment
St Nicholas House
70 Newport
Lincoln
LN1 3DP**

Tel: 01522 540069

Fax: 01522 540090

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APPENDIX I IEMA REVIEW CRITERIA

A. GENERAL CRITERIA

◆A1. Description of the Development

The ES should describe the purpose and objectives for the development. The proposal and its need should be placed in the context of local/regional/national plans/objectives/strategies. The anticipated time scales of construction, operation and (where appropriate) decommissioning of the proposal should be given. The likely methods of construction (techniques and equipment to be used) should be given where construction could give rise to significant impacts. In instances where the likely methods of construction are unknown the ES should indicate possible methods and adopt the worst-case scenario approach in prediction of related impacts. The description should include the physical characteristics of the proposal, including its location; the design and size of the development and the area of land take during construction and operation. The ES should describe the main characteristics of any production processes, for instance the nature and quantity of materials to be used. The description should be illustrated by the use of maps and/or diagrams. A brief outline of the experience of the operator and the operational process(es) that will be employed should be included within the ES. The ES should provide reasoned estimates for the quantities and type of traffic that will arise during construction and operation. Where materials are considered to be an important resource, the ES should describe and quantify the materials to be used. The quantities and types of residues and emissions generated at each of the above phases should also be estimated.

◆A2. Site Description

The area of proposed land take should be clearly described and indicated on an appropriate map or diagram. The land uses on the site and the surrounding area should be described and illustrated. The ES should describe any policies, plans or designations that are relevant to the site and its surroundings. The study area should be consistent with the area potentially affected by the development. The description should place the affected land in the context of its surroundings. The ES should also describe how the affected land would be expected to develop without the proposal and the future status of the land in the absence of the project (e.g. is the site allocated for development or how would the conservation status change over time).

◆A3. Scoping

The ES should describe the scoping process that has been undertaken to identify key impacts. The description should include details of consultation with appropriate statutory and non-statutory consultees, including the public. The ES should identify those parties consulted and provide a summary of their responses. Where issues raised by the consultees are not to be addressed in detail in the ES, a reasoned justification for their exclusion should be given. The scoping process should identify those aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly affected by the development (including in particular, population, fauna, flora, geology and soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, including the architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the inter-relationship between the above factors). The

ES should also evaluate any direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects, resulting from the existence of the development, the use of natural resources and the emission of pollutants, the creation of nuisances and the elimination of waste. The ES should clearly state what effects will, and what effects will not, be addressed and how this decision was reached, together with the spatial and temporal scope of the assessment. The ES should identify the regulations under which the EIA is required, and indicate whether it is also to be used to address other regulatory requirements (e.g. Appropriate Assessment under the requirements of the Habitats Directive, or as part of a Pollution Prevention and Control Application).

◆A4. Consideration of Alternatives

The ES should describe the main alternatives to the proposal that have been considered. For example, alternative sites, construction practices, plant and equipment, operating processes and site layouts should be considered (where appropriate). The advantages and disadvantages of each option should be clearly stated. The main reasons for the selection of the preferred option should be described in outline, taking into account the environmental effects. Other factors influencing the choice of alternative should be noted, e.g. feasibility, cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of each option. If a formal option appraisal has been carried out it should be described and the relevant decision factors noted.

B. ISSUE SPECIFIC CRITERIA

Criteria B1-B5 will be assessed against each issue independently and not as a generic overview of all the issues combined. Grades will be given to indicate how the ES addresses each issue. Where no points of note have been identified and highlighted within the text of the review for an issue against any of the issue specific criteria, the reader (of the review) should assume that the ES satisfactorily adheres to the criteria for that issue.

◆B1. Baseline Conditions

The ES should describe the current condition of those aspects of the environment that are likely to be significantly affected by the development. An indication of how these aspects could be expected to develop if the project were not to proceed should also be given. Where existing data has been used to establish the baseline the source of the data should be identified in the ES. The ES should provide a clear description of the methods used to supplement existing information. Where possible, the data gathered should be expressed quantitatively. The baseline environment should be evaluated, for example in relation to its sensitivity and importance. This could be achieved by comparison to relevant threshold limits (WHO Limits, EU Quality Standards, etc.) or by reference to appropriate environmental designations. Any limitations of baseline surveys should be recognised.

◆B2. Prediction of Impact Magnitude

The predictions for the magnitude of the likely significant effects of the development should be identified in the ES. The magnitude of the impact should be predicted as a deviation from the established baseline conditions, for each phase of the proposal. The information and data used

to predict the magnitude of impact should be clearly described. Where there are any gaps or uncertainty, these should be identified. The methods used to establish magnitude should be clearly described and be appropriate and reasonable in relation to the importance of the impact. Where assumptions or unsupported data has been used in the predictions these should be highlighted and accompanied by an indication of the reliability/confidence of those assumptions or data. The data given should be quantified and levels of confidence in the estimates given. The ES should identify quantitatively the impacts that remain following mitigation. The ES should evaluate any direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, short, medium and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects, resulting from the existence of the development, the use of natural resources and the emission of pollutants, the creation of nuisances and the elimination of waste.

◆B3. Impact Significance

The significance of all impacts should be assessed using the appropriate national and international quality standards limits (WHO Limits, EU Quality Standards etc). Where no such standards exist, the ES should describe the judgements (assumptions and value systems) that underpin the attribution of significance. The assessment of significance should consider the impact's deviation from the established baseline condition, the sensitivity of the environment and the extent to which the impact will be mitigated or is reversible. The range of factors, which are likely to influence the assessment of significance, should be clearly identified. The ES should also detail how these variables will affect the significance of the impacts over the life of the development. The ES should identify the significance of impacts that remain following mitigation.

◆B4. Mitigation

The ES should describe the measures proposed to avoid, reduce, and if possible, remedy significant adverse impacts. The ES should provide an indication of the effectiveness of the stated measures. The ES should demonstrate a clear commitment to implementing the mitigation measures and indicate how and when these measures will be implemented. Where there is uncertainty over the effectiveness, or it is dependent on assumptions, justification should be provided for the acceptance of the assumptions.

◆B5. Follow-Up

The ES should provide details of any management plans that are to be implemented to deliver mitigation measures and to monitor the environmental impact of the project. These should also provide details of the time scales of the management plans and their geographical extent. Where a management plan is to be integrated into an environmental management system, the ES should describe how this would be implemented. The ES should identify those responsible for the follow-up programme and describe how the results of such a programme will affect the proposal's operation.

C. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

◆C1. Presentation

The ES should be clear and logical in its layout and presentation and be capable of being understood by the non-specialist. The use of technical terms should be kept to a minimum, with a glossary provided. A full list of references should be provided. The inclusion of information not directly relevant to the nature of the proposal and its associated impacts should be avoided. Plans should be provided to assist in understanding the locations of impacts and should be labelled with all places mentioned in the text.

◆C2. Objectivity

The ES should be a balanced document, providing an unbiased account of the environmental effects with reasoned and justifiable arguments. The ES should give appropriate prominence to both positive and negative effects relative to their importance. The ES should summarise the issues raised by consultees. The ES should be explicit in recognising areas of limitations within the ES, any difficulties that have been encountered and assumptions on which the assessment is based. How these have affected the ES and what measures were taken to limit them should be detailed.

◆C3. Non Technical Summary (NTS)

The NTS should provide sufficient information for the non-specialist reader to understand the main environmental impacts of the proposal without reference to the main ES. The NTS should include a summary of the description of the development, the main alternatives considered, the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development, the likely significant impacts and the mitigation measures to be implemented. The NTS should include or make appropriate reference to maps and diagrams which, at a minimum, illustrate the location of the application site, the footprint of the proposed development, and the location of relevant key features. The NTS should be provided as a separate, stand alone document to facilitate a wider readership.

D. AREAS OF ORIGINALITY / INNOVATION

Any areas of innovation or originality will be noted in this section. If the ES does not merit comment in this section, it will be deleted from the review. This section will be not be graded.

INSTITUTE REVIEW GRADES

A	Excellent, no tasks left incomplete
B	Good, only minor omissions and inadequacies
C	Satisfactory despite omissions and inadequacies
D	Parts well attempted, but must as a whole be considered unsatisfactory because of omissions and/or inadequacies
E	Poor, significant omissions or inadequacies
F	Very poor, most tasks left incomplete
N/A	Not applicable. The review topic is not applicable or relevant in the context of this statement

REFERENCES

1. Lee N & Colley R (1990), *Reviewing the Quality of Environmental Statements, Occasional Paper No. 24*, EIA Centre, University of Manchester; and as updated by Lee N, Colley R, Bonde R & Simpson J (1999), *Reviewing the Quality of Environmental Statements and Environmental Appraisals, Occasional Paper No. 55*, EIA Centre, University of Manchester.
2. Commission of the European Communities (1985), *Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, (85/337/EEC)*, Official Journal of the European Communities, 175, Brussels; and as amended by the Directive 97/11/EC.
3. Department of the Environment (1994), *PPG23 - Planning and Pollution Control*, HMSO, London.

APPENDIX 2 COSTS OF REGISTERED MEMBERSHIP

◆Application Fee

The application fee for Registered Membership is currently £1,155 + VAT. In circumstances where the submission is unusually long or complex, an additional charge will be made. This is in addition to the annual IEMA membership fee, and covers the cost of the review work.

◆Annual Registered Membership Fees

Applicants who are successful in gaining Registered Environmental Impact Assessor status then pay annual membership fees as follows:

Group	No. of Environmental Employees	Annual Registered Membership Fee (ex VAT)
1	1-5	£347
2	6-25	£520
3	26-100	£866
4	100+	£1153