

Promoting successful careers

Staying up to date with training has never been more important than today and future professionals will need skills that can adapt with changing careers, says CIHT Vice President Deborah Sims.

CIHT has supported and encouraged professional development for over 84 years.

It was in 1934 that the Institution first required new members to be academically qualified. Since then the Institution has helped to develop and improve a range of qualifications from NVQs, degrees and degree apprenticeships through to professional qualifications including TPP, EngTech, IEng and CEng.

As a learned society CIHT has a role to play in promoting research, skills development and knowledge dissemination. The Institution supports members at every stage in their career, offering and promoting a wide range of learning and training opportunities.

At the very start of their journey we are keen to encourage as many young people as possible to consider careers in the built environment and especially in transportation related professions. In 2016 CIHT worked with the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund to develop our very successful Careers Guidance Toolkit which has been used to enthuse hundreds of young people about our industry.

We now have a network of STEM ambassadors using the toolkit to go into schools and talk about the broad range of careers in highways and transportation, and there is always room for more volunteers. This initiative goes hand in hand with CIHT's ground breaking work on diversity and the development of our highly acclaimed Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit.

Encouraging young women and people from a wider range of backgrounds to enter our profession will go some way towards addressing the much talked about skills shortage. We want to promote the message that our transport networks are used by everyone and so they should

be designed, built and maintained by representatives from the whole community.

Having attracted people into our industry we need to ensure that they stay committed, enthused and competent. This requires a range of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities to suit all our members at whatever stage they may be in their careers.

This could include apprentices and graduates who are learning the basics, young professionals who have joined us from other career paths, women and men returning to work after having a family and older people wanting to stay up to date with rapidly changing technology. You are never too old or too young to learn a new skill, or to develop your career in a new direction.

Graduates leaving university this year can reasonably expect to be working for around 60 years and may therefore have several careers during their lifetime. We can only dream of the technologies they will be using and the workplaces they will inhabit in the 2070s. Technology is changing fast and we all need to be open to new ideas and willing to learn and develop our skills.

Professional skills such as communication, negotiation, adaptability and creative thinking may well prove to be more useful in the long term than specific software or technical knowledge. Employers need people who can challenge and innovate while also having a good grounding of the underlying principles and constraints.

The competencies required to submit a successful portfolio of evidence for professional review highlight the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed by modern engineers and valued by employers across the sector.

200
Number of STEM ambassadors in CIHT



↑ Deborah Sims

Gaining a professional qualification requires an applicant to compile evidence of the required competencies and to reflect on their career to date.

This process is usually very rewarding and candidates often say how valuable it has been. Learning and training gaps can be identified and appropriate action put in place.

All of our members are expected to carry out CPD throughout their careers and to retain evidence of this alongside reflections on the value and application of professional development to their work. This is already a mandatory requirement for members who are Engineering Council and TPP registrants.

This guide provides opportunities to consider new training and learning opportunities, plug gaps identified through appraisals and the professional review process or to identify training and learning for your team.

I hope you enjoy reading it and that it gives you some inspiration to develop a new skill or perhaps to take your career in a new direction.

"Creative thinking may be more useful long term than technical knowledge."

Deborah Sims

250
School and college activities in one year