

# Upgrade assessment to Chartered Member

## Preparing for your online application

Ref: 6646@CIPD 2020

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Upgrade assessment is to establish if your experience meets the membership requirements for Chartered Member. You'll need to demonstrate your experience by sharing specific examples of your work and clearly showing how they match the membership standards.

This guide is designed to help you prepare for your Upgrade to Chartered Member. Before preparing for an Upgrading assessment, ensure you have completed our Pre-Assessment Tool and received confirmation of your eligibility\*. For more information on these steps, visit **our website**.

You can then prepare and start completing the Upgrade application form, which can be found on our website.

## 2. PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

Before submitting your application, you should check that you have received confirmation from the CIPD that you are eligible to Upgrade. You should then ensure you are very familiar with the membership requirements for the grade you wish to apply for. The membership standards for Chartered Member, can be found **here**.

The membership standards are taken directly from the new Profession Map – but you won't be assessed on every standard. We have provided more information below on what you'll be asked and what to prepare.

### Preparing your examples

We advise that you download and review the requirements carefully and make notes of the types of activities and behaviours that are expected at this level. You should think about and prepare some examples of where you have demonstrated these activities and behaviours – you may find it helpful to refer to these notes when writing your submission.

When completing the online application, you will need to provide specific work-based examples of the impact of your role. The examples you provide should be drawn **from the last five years**. They can be from an organisation you are employed by (or have been recently employed by), or from organisations you work with as a Consultant.

The questions are designed to help you focus on providing specific evidence against the membership requirements. The bullets under each main question are a guide to compiling your response and **we strongly recommend** you follow them and **address each element** to keep your answers focused. Please use specific examples. For each question, please provide timelines for the work you're referring to, and which employer they relate to.

\* If you have recently sent your CV for a free review and we've advised that now is a good time for you to upgrade, you do not need to complete the Pre-Assessment Tool and can complete this form-based assessment.

Just as you would for a competency-based interview, ensure that in the examples you give, you are clear about what your role was, what you did, and what the outcome was, particularly in terms of the impact on the business. Each question carries a word limit (shown in italics at the bottom of each question) – anything over this amount will not be assessed to ensure fairness to all applicants.

You need to be succinct and clear in the examples you are giving. Whilst the context of your example is relevant, we suggest you keep this short and talk very specifically about what you did, and what the outcome was.

We understand that some of your work may be of a sensitive nature. The information you provide is used only for the purposes of assessing your application to Upgrade to Chartered Member. You should remove sensitive information from any submission, such as names of individual staff.

### Hints and tips

- ✓ Make sure you can provide examples from the last five years.
- ✓ It's really important that the examples are commensurate with the level applied for. So don't just answer the question – make sure the level of complexity, seniority, depth and breadth of your evidence is right for Chartered Membership. **The assessment decision is based purely on the evidence presented within your assessment**; you will not be given the opportunity to provide further clarification if you are unsuccessful.
- ✓ Don't try to tell us everything you know about HR or L&D. Please ensure your response addresses the specific question. The bullet points under each main question should guide your answer so make sure you cover *all* questions asked within your responses.
- ✓ Check your word count before submitting your application as anything over the stated work count will not be assessed to ensure fairness to all applicants.
- ✓ Emphasise your contribution – use 'I' instead of 'we'.
- ✓ **You'll need to demonstrate the impact of your contribution.** Whether that's through people and business metrics, or clear evidence of the value you created for stakeholders, you'll need to be clear on what this impact has been.
- ✓ Whilst preparing you may want to refer back to recent development and/or performance reviews to remind yourself of the work that you've done.

### What we mean by impact

When we refer to the 'impact' of your work, we're talking about the **value your work creates for stakeholders**. This is not the *output* of your work, but *how* your work has met the needs of different stakeholders in different ways.

**It's not the 'what', but the 'so what'.**

(For example, an *output* of your work might be that you've developed a new approach to performance management. But the *value created* is that managers are now having more focused development discussions, and employees feel the culture is more positive.)

You can evidence this value in two ways:

- **Data and metrics** which show the measurable value. For example: productivity measures, engagement survey results, absence data
- **Other evidence** which demonstrates change has taken place. Such as feedback from focus groups, skills gaps now being met, senior team regularly reviewing performance.

We'd expect most work at Chartered Member level to use metrics as *part* of measuring impact – but this is dependent on what changes you're delivering. The timescales and scope of the impact we expect to see are:

- Medium- to long-term value for employees and/or organisations – value which is sustained over more than a year. The impact of your work is likely to be both operational and strategic, generated from your wider thinking to change the way things are done. It will affect other people and business practices and impact a wide range of people across the organisation, including customers and colleagues.

You'll need to be able to talk about the 'so what' impact that your work has had, and the evidence you have that demonstrates this. Evidence could include:

- The value created for stakeholders and the scale/scope of this value
- Feedback from key stakeholder groups
- Benefits delivered for stakeholders
- People, organisation, commercial measures (before and after)
- Business indicators or data (before and after)
- Cost savings

You can find some further examples of what we mean by impact in the final section of this guidance.

### 3. YOUR CV

You must submit an up-to-date copy of your CV or **career summary** with your completed application form.

Please ensure your CV includes:

- Employment dates and timeframes.
- Your current role including key accountabilities, responsibilities, achievements and their impact. You need to demonstrate the scope and scale of the projects you have worked on. If you are a consultant, please include information about the roles undertaken/projects covered with the clients/organisations you work with.
- Previous roles and organisations you have been employed by, or organisations you work with as a consultant, particularly focusing on the last five years.

This will help the assessor to establish the context behind the more detailed examples you provide in your application.

Please attach an organisation chart, if available, as this will help the assessor understand your role in the context of your current organisation. Please make sure it's clear to us on the organisation chart which role you currently hold.

#### 4. More examples of impact

In your assessment you'll be asked to talk about the impact of your work – the 'so what' of the work you've done. We sometimes talk about this as 'the value your work has created'.

Below are some examples of impact and what 'good' looks like. These are examples only – they should give you an idea of how to describe impact and show you the amount of information we expect you to be able to provide.

##### Example 1:

**Output (the 'what'):** Employee well-being programme in place

**Value created (the 'so what'):** Less sickness related to stress; significant shift in culture, driven by directors – more open approach to well-being and mental health.

**Evidence for this in metrics:** 12% reduction in sick days relating to work stress, saving circa £300k; occupational health appointments averaging 38/year, down from 52/year; attendance at well-being events up 56%.

**Other evidence of impact:** Organisation messaging can use the government mental health logo on all advertising as an endorsed workplace; well-being champions in place and are stepping in before issues become formal through HR; organisation seen as 'best in sector', we're sharing our programme with other organisations; quotes from employees via the six-monthly survey show a positive response.

##### Example 2:

**Output (the 'what'):** New competency framework and role descriptions in place

**Value created (the 'so what'):** Organisation now able to recruit, develop and manage consistently against a set of behaviours; role clarity provided for 45-strong people team.

**Evidence for this in metrics:** 45 role descriptions in place; seven new behaviours developed alongside.

**Other evidence of impact:** all people team JDs now in line with CIPD's new Profession Map and representative of good practice at each level; people team now clear on roles and responsibilities; organisation now able to undertake accurate learning gap analysis, talent reviews and performance management (now being developed against this framework); framework structure for career progression and role creation which can be used for other professions in the organisation.