

# Assessment of Professional Development scheme (APD)

## Guidance for applicants

# Foreword

The ability to call oneself a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner has taken the profession over 100 years to achieve. It is a recognition of the high levels of skills and knowledge required in environmental health practice and the ability to apply those skills and knowledge in a professional manner.

Chartered status is a recognition of one's professionalism by one's peers and an indication to the wider community of that professionalism.

I hope that after reading this guidance on the Assessment of Professional Development Scheme you will go forward to achieve chartered status. I would encourage you to do so both for your own career and for the good of the profession.

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Chairman of Education and Professional Standards Board

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## 1. Introduction to the Assessment of Professional Development (APD)

- 1.1 The purpose of the Assessment of Professional Development Scheme is to provide a pathway and a gateway to Chartered Status for environmental health practitioners, and serves as a verification of a member's professional development. Chartered Status is a quality standard for an environmental health practitioner (EHP), demonstrating a high level of achievement as a member of the environmental health profession.
- 1.2 Becoming a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner makes a statement about the level of your personal development, and environmental health practitioners with Chartered Status are seen as exemplars and ambassadors of the profession. It is the culmination of several years of applied professional experience and the acquisition of skills and abilities along the way. Having said that, Chartered Status is not appropriate for everyone, but it is expected that the achievement of Chartered Status is the standard to which members of the CIEH will aspire, either now or in the future.
- 1.3 A primary purpose of this guidance is to explain the APD scheme in order to provide transparency and equality of opportunity. In setting any standard, there is always a balance to be achieved. The standard must be sufficiently robust that it serves its purpose in upholding the high standards expected of a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner; whilst at the same time being as supportive of members and their personal and professional development as possible. It is hoped that the APD process will contribute to your continuing personal and professional development and that you will feel encouraged to apply.
- 1.4 This guidance is designed to support you in succeeding through the Assessment of Professional Development. The CIEH welcomes feedback on your experiences, either by email or on the feedback form provided at the end of the part 2 interview.

## 2. Finding out about APD and Chartered Status

- 2.1 This guidance covers the main aspects of APD. It is aimed at experienced environmental health practitioners and therefore assumes your ability to utilise existing transferable skills in preparing for the assessment. You are advised to read the whole document before embarking on APD. Additionally, the requirements governing the Assessment of Professional Development scheme are set out in the APD Regulations. This set of regulations and other associated regulations, such as the Chartered Status Regulations, are available on the website at [www.cieh.org/apd](http://www.cieh.org/apd)

## 3. Overview

- 3.1 The APD is divided into two independent parts. Part 1 must be successfully completed before progressing to part 2. The application for each part is made separately. There is no time limit between taking part 1 and part 2. An applicant may have up to three attempts at each part.
- 3.2 In theory, members are eligible to take the Assessment of Professional Development at any time after they have qualified (i.e. have been awarded the EHRB Certificate of Registration or its equivalent). In practice members will want to consider when would be the most suitable time to consider applying for APD, taking into account their individual circumstances, professional development and the expertise which they have developed as an environmental health practitioner. Clearly there are other factors, apart from time, in relation to gaining experience, and the assessors will not be informed of an individual applicant's date of qualification.
- 3.3 Whilst there are few constraints on actually making the application, you will need to consider the information in this guidance in order to have an understanding of the standards to be achieved in order to be best placed to be successful in each part. As already stated, the APD scheme is designed to be a gateway to Chartered Status. As such the standard is based on the personal and professional development expected to be achieved after five years of qualified professional experience.

## 4. APD: Part 1

- 4.1 Applicants are required to submit evidence to demonstrate the development of seven skills. This is not a test of knowledge. It assesses strengths in applying skills and knowledge through environmental health interventions to achieve the appropriate outcomes which you will be seeking as an environmental health practitioner. The evidence submitted, therefore, will need to relate to interventions or projects that you have completed and which you believe demonstrates the use of those seven skills.

The seven skills are:-

Investigative  
Interpretive  
Analytical  
Communication  
Educative  
Organisational, and  
Attitudinal

- 4.2 You will need to refer to these skills to make sure that the submission provides sufficient evidence of your ability to utilise these skills in practice and in relation to the prevailing circumstances. Please refer to appendix 1 which explains the skills more fully.
- 4.3 Part 1 of the scheme is based on these seven skills – and you are expected to demonstrate these to a level expected of an environmental health practitioner with five years post-qualification experience. It is expected that, over time, skills will become honed and refined so that they can be applied effectively, irrespective of the area of environmental health in which you practice.
- 4.4 The application form and fee is submitted with one, two or three case studies. The total word limit on the submission is 9000 words (excluding appendices). You are at liberty to submit one case study up to this limit if you feel it provides written evidence to show how the skills have been used in practice. However, depending on the subject of the case study, you may come to the view that a single case study does not provide sufficient evidence of all the skills. In this case you may submit one or two additional case studies to give the wider scope to provide the evidence across the seven skills. All case studies must relate to work undertaken by you since qualification. Some dissertations prepared in partial fulfilment of post-graduate qualifications may be suitable as the basis for a main or supplementary case study, subject to amendment to meet the purpose of a case study.
- 4.5 The size of the appendices is not specified although you should remember that you need only submit sufficient to demonstrate that you possess the seven skills, and your selection of your appendices will also, in part, be a demonstration of some of those skills.
- 4.5 Regardless of the number of case studies you submit you should be aware that it would be wrong to think that the number of words submitted is proportionate to the quality of the evidence being provided.

4.6 The marking system places a grade against each of the seven skills. The following grades are possible:-

- A Skill demonstrated in most respects
- B Skill demonstrated to an acceptable extent
- C Skill demonstrated to an inadequate level
- D Skill demonstrated barely or not at all

Each skill is graded separately and to be successful in the Part 1 assessment 6 or more of the skills must be demonstrated at A or B, with the seventh, if relevant, being no less than a C.

4.7 Please note that, for part 1, the applicant does not have to attend an interview or make any further submission.

4.8 The assessors will initially seek evidence entirely within your submitted, written documentation. If there is more than one case study, then the whole documentation is assessed as a single submission. The requirement is that across the whole documentation (i.e. comprising one main case study plus the option of up to two supplementary case studies) at least six of the seven skills are demonstrated to an acceptable extent.

4.9 If the assessment team is minded to, it can arrive at what is termed a 'deferred result'. This means that the assessment team feels that the submission has some merit but fails to achieve the required standard because of, for example, insufficient information or a lack of clarity in a particular area. In such cases the team can ask the applicant to provide clarification and the team will not complete its assessment until it has considered the further information provided. The applicant has two months in which to provide this information. If the applicant fails to do so within this time limit then the team will revert to its original 'not successful' verdict.

4.10 Moderation of the assessments will take place to ensure equality and consistency of the process.

## **Summary of Part 1**

### **Required**

1 main case study of up to 9000 words (or less if other case studies also submitted). Word limit excludes appendices.

### **Optional**

1 or 2 supplementary case studies

### **Purpose**

To provide evidence of 7 skills, at least 6 of which are to be demonstrated to an acceptable extent based on the expectations of an EHP with 5 years of qualified professional experience.

Total word limit 9000 excluding appendices.



## 5. APD: Part 2

- 5.1 Having successfully completed part 1, members are eligible to apply for part 2. This part is completely separate from part 1. The submission made for part 1 is not referred to in this stage of the assessment unless you decide to include the subject within your part 2 submission. The team of two assessors for part 2 do not have access to any documentation related to part 1. The assessors are likely to be different for the assessment of each part.
- 5.2 The part 2 assessment considers five attributes which cover a broad range of issues. The assessment takes place at an assessment event where you will have a professional, 'peer to peer' discussion and when you will have the opportunity to demonstrate that you have the attributes.

The five attributes which need to be demonstrated by you are:-

- A depth of understanding of your particular area of expertise
- An appreciation of the context within which you deliver your expertise
- An understanding of your wider role as an environmental health practitioner in contributing to public health
- Excellent presentation and verbal communication skills
- A professional approach to your work as an environmental health practitioner.

Please refer to appendix 2 which expands the five attributes.

- 5.3 The Part 2 application involves the submission of a presentation and a portfolio of evidence. The submission will include a hard copy version of the presentation or a synopsis of this presentation (which will include its subject) and must be sent on A4 paper. The subject of the presentation or content of the portfolio documentation cannot be changed or augmented after it has been submitted and before the interview.
- 5.4 Details of what you should, and what you might, include within your portfolio can be found in appendix 3.
- 5.5 Assessment sessions to enable you to have the professional discussion about your portfolio and your attributes will be arranged at regular scheduled times. These sessions will be advertised in Environmental Health News and posted on the website. Your application must be received by the CIEH at least 2 months before the assessment event. If your application is invalid, the CIEH will return it to you and ask you to amend it and resubmit it.
- 5.6 Immediately prior to your session you will meet your assessors who will take time to talk with you about your plan on how you propose to use the assessment time available to you. Prior to coming to an assessment event you should have thought about this and planned how the time could be best divided to give you the greatest chance to show your attributes. After talking to you about your plan, the assessors will invite you to

arrange the room to your convenience and allow you time to prepare yourself as you see fit. The assessors will want a short break, at about 15 minutes before the end of the assessment, so that they can review what they have seen so far in the discussion with you. You should schedule this break into your plan and use it to review your performance as well. At the end of the break the assessors will give you an indication of those attributes where you have presented sufficient evidence, or highlight the attribute or attributes that you should focus on in the remaining 15 minutes, as further evidence is needed. Your plan might wish to include contingencies to respond to the assessors' comments.

- 5.7 Once the formal assessment session begins you will be invited to make your presentation before going on to discuss your submission with the assessors. This professional discussion will take a maximum of an hour (which includes the time taken for your presentation – but excludes the “time out” period around 15 minutes before the end of the session).
- 5.8 The style and content of the presentation is not prescribed. As a guide presentations are likely to take between 10 and 20 minutes. However, the time taken is a matter for you to manage within the one hour allocated for the whole assessment session. Both the presentation and the submitted portfolio give you the opportunity to demonstrate the five attributes to level based on the expectations of an environmental health practitioner with five years professional experience, and who considers themselves worthy of Chartered Practitioner status. The presentation does not have to be prepared using a software package e.g. a desk-top publishing or presentation package. The choice of the medium is for you to decide (provided that it can be reproduced on A4 paper). The CIEH will **NOT** provide any IT facilities, or other equipment for your use. If you wish to use a lap-top computer or any other hardware to support your presentation, you will need to bring it with you and set it up in the time provided before your session. You should not assume access to a suitable power socket so you will need to assure you have sufficiently charged your batteries if you choose to use a lap top. You will be expected to make the presentation based on the A4 copies submitted with the application. You will wish to bring an A4 paper copy to the interview which may be annotated for your own use.
- 5.9 The purpose of the portfolio is to provide evidence of the professionalism and expertise required by the attributes. This will provide the foundation for the discussion with the assessors at the assessment session. It is not a test of knowledge. However, there will be times when it becomes unavoidable that specialist or technical issues form part of the dialogue.
- 5.10 It might be helpful to think about the attributes as being part of the repertoire of a professional. In this case “repertoire” might be thought of as the total package of an environmental health practitioner’s skills, abilities and attributes. Clearly, the work of an environmental health practitioner (or indeed any professional) involves the use of knowledge and repertoire in close combination. It is sometimes difficult to separate the two in practice. To expand this further, if you have an area of expertise in, say, liquor licensing, there might be a point during the interview when the assessors want to explore perceptions of the impact of binge drinking as a public health issue. In the response you might want to refer to knowledge of human biology or, perhaps, sociology.

5.11 The marking system for the part 2 assessment is different to that used in part 1. The attributes are not graded but must all be demonstrated to a level that is consistent with someone who aspires to be a Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner.

## **Summary of Part 2**

### **Required**

Portfolio submission with a presentation

An assessment session comprising a professional discussion and the presentation

### **Purpose**

To demonstrate evidence of the 5 attributes, to a level based on an EHP with 5 years of experience, who is worthy of chartered practitioner status.

Part 2 involves a professional discussion about the submitted portfolio, and a presentation throughout which the two assessors will be seeking evidence that the applicant has developed the five attributes.

## 6. Assessors and event facilitators

6.1 A team of two assessors is allocated for each assessment. They will each hold Chartered Status themselves and have volunteered their own time to contribute to the profession on an unpaid basis. You will not be assessed by an assessor who knows you to the extent that they could potentially have formed any view as to your expertise and abilities. An event facilitator will be present at each part 2 session.

6.2 The role of the event facilitator is to-

- Monitor the process and make sure it complies with the scheme;
- Facilitate, but not participate in, the decision-making by the two assessors;
- Assist in the construction of feedback to applicants;
- Provide advice to the assessors on any aspect of the scheme; and
- Deal with any administrative matters that arise at the venue on behalf of CIEH.

The event facilitator does not take part in the assessment. The event facilitator is an experienced assessor who has received additional training to enable him or her to undertake the above roles. An event facilitator is entitled to observe any discussion, view all documentation and be present during discussions at any session.

## 7. Withdrawal of applications, non attendance and late arrivals at interviews

7.1 If an applicant has difficulties in advance of the assessment event, the applicant should contact the Education Unit as soon as possible so that information and advice can be provided as to the best way to proceed. For further details see the Assessment of Professional Development Regulations.

## 8. APD Outcomes

8.1 Part 1- Normally, the outcome will be sent to the applicant within three months of the date on which the full application was received. Written feedback on all the skill domains will be provided to all applicants.

Part 2 – Normally, the outcome will be sent to the applicant within 21 days of the date of the interview. Written feedback will be provided to all applicants. Successful applicants will receive information about applying for Chartered Status.

8.2 The part 2 assessment provides for the 'banking' of attributes. For example, if you demonstrate that you have three of the five attributes but fail to provide sufficient evidence on the remaining two, you are credited with the 'three', which are held or 'banked'. When you return to a subsequent assessment, you will only have to provide evidence of the 'two'.

8.3 An unsuccessful applicant has a right of appeal in respect of each stage. If an applicant wishes to appeal then they must do so on the appropriate forms which are available by contacting the. The applicant has 28 days from the posting of the results to appeal setting out the details of the case and justification of the ground(s) for the appeal. The grounds of appeal are set out in the APD Regulations which are available on the website.

## 9. How to Apply for APD

9.1 APD briefing sessions will be scheduled and advertised in Environmental Health News and posted on the website. Applicants are advised to attend a briefing before commencing the preparation of their submission.

9.2 In order to make an application for either part 1 or part 2 the applicant **must:**

- be a voting or graduate member at the time of both the application and the assessment;
- make the application in writing on the appropriate form;
- submit the appropriate fee; and
- provide 3 copies of the submission
  - For part 1: 3 copies of the case study or case studies.
  - For part 2: 3 copies of the presentation and portfolio.

These documents need to be bound so that they can be shipped to the assessors. The forms and information on the current fees are available on the website [www..org](http://www..org)

9.3 When applying for part 1, the applicant can submit the application at any time as all applications will be processed on demand. However, for part 2, which involves planned assessment sessions, there will be advertised deadlines for applications approximately two months in advance of the scheduled session dates.

9.4 Contact information Please address any enquires about APD to CIEH Education Division: 0207 827 5929 or by email to [education@cieh.org](mailto:education@cieh.org)

# Appendix 1

## Outline of the seven skills considered in APD part 1.

In order to gain an understanding of each of the seven skills the following explanation is provided. It is important to recognise that there are many ways in which the applicant may demonstrate the seven skills.

Please note that the examples given below are possible ways in which the skill may be demonstrated. It should not be considered as an exhaustive list, or be considered as a check-list.

### **Investigative**

The collection and recording of primary data. Research and enquiry.

For example:-

- Design of tests, surveys and experiments and the decision-making process behind the choice of techniques.
- Identification of the range of information sources available and choice of those sources.
- Measures to verify accuracy in the collection of information.
- The use of appropriate means of recording primary data.
- Understanding of issues such as confidentiality, data protection and investigatory powers.

### **Analytical**

Being able to manage and present data to provide information in a meaningful format.

For example:-

- Ability to order, collate and compare data sets.
- Ability to evaluate the data, including as an evidence base.
- Ability to identify inconsistencies and gaps in the data.
- Ability to assess the sufficiency of data gathered, based on the aims of the research or experiment.
- Ability to identify corroborating or conflicting data, and validate data.

## **Interpretive**

Being able to apply information in decision-making: assessing risk, evaluating options and reaching conclusions.

For example:-

- Ability to identify salient points and identify critical information.
- Ability to generate options using information.
- Ability to draw inferences, reach conclusions and make comparisons.
- Ability to identify implications of possible actions.
- Ability to relate information to research findings and theory.
- Ability to relate situations to statute, guidance and best practice.
- Ability to give a range of possible explanations for the results of the analysis.
- Ability to interpolate and extrapolate from given data.
- Ability to evaluate, consider options and make decisions.
- Ability to assess risk to health.
- Ability to determine urgency of actions.

## **Communication**

The ability to be able to exchange information effectively in a variety of circumstances.

For example:-

- Listening skills.
- Use of appropriate language, format and style in different circumstances.
- Ability to summarise and convey information succinctly.
- Being able to build a rapport in different situations to facilitate communication.
- Ensuring advice is given and understood.
- Being able to speak with authority, in appropriate circumstances.

- Generating confidence in the information being conveyed.
- Using a variety of approaches to present information.
- Ability to target information in a timely and balanced way.
- Providing well-founded reasoning to support information.
- Ability to speak in public.

## **Educative**

Being able to recognise and use opportunities for changing attitudes, beliefs or behaviour through imparting information, knowledge or advice, and identification or measurement of change.

For example:-

- Ability to use education as an integral part of your work.
- Ability to inspire and motivate others to change through providing information or insights.
- Adjusting your own knowledge and skill base to take account of new information.
- Being able to influence and persuade.
- Awareness of how ill-founded beliefs and attitudes may have arisen.
- Ability to inform individuals or groups using different techniques.
- Ability to demonstrate skills or practical techniques to others.
- Coaching and mentoring abilities.

## **Organisational**

The ability to use project management techniques, wider management techniques and the ability to work in partnership and deliver timely results.

For example:-

- Ability to work in team settings, and in partnerships.
- Effective management of resources including people.

- Ability to assess performance and effectiveness and vary approach accordingly to meet aims and deadlines.
- Ability to contribute to the development of policy and strategic planning.
- Willingness to take ownership of projects and responsibility for project management through to completion.
- Ability to work collaboratively and build consensus.

## **Attitudinal**

This is encapsulated in a professional approach to the applicant's work.

For example:-

- Having an understanding and active concern for public health.
- Ability to see things from a variety of standpoints.
- Personal integrity with regard to probity, ethics, equality of opportunity, human rights etc.
- Open-mindedness.
- Ability to reflect on actions, identify scope for improvement and actions to address development needs.
- Recognition of own prejudices.
- Awareness of own strengths and development needs.
- Persistence and the ability to focus to achieve goals or objectives.
- Ability to recognise subjectivity and act objectively.

## Appendix 2

### **Outline of the Five Attributes considered in APD Part 2**

The explanations provided below are intended to be a guide. If the attribute was to be prescribed in detail it would become little more than a check list and as a result the APD process would be devalued. There is no definitive set of specific actions which would constitute proof of the development of these attributes.

In relation to the last attribute, for instance, it is not sufficient to show that an example of your professional approach is that you always meet your continuous professional development (CPD) requirements. In fact, that is a requirement of the applicant's membership. CPD is simply a means to track some of the opportunities for development; whereas the applicant's professional approach may be more to do with their commitment to work to the best of their abilities to identify their own development needs (and address them), a willingness to reflect on their own development and the quality of the training and learning they undergo, and an open-mindedness to new ideas, amongst other things.

#### **A depth of understanding of your particular area of expertise**

Chartered members will be expected to have developed a significant area of expertise in some aspect of environmental health. Consequently, you will be expected to demonstrate an enthusiasm for and a depth of understanding of your chosen area of expertise. If you work in a particular aspect of environmental health, your expertise should be well developed. If you work more generally across environmental health you should, after 5 years of professional practice, have developed an interest and expertise in at least one aspect of your general work such that others come to you for advice and assistance when they encounter a problem in that area of work. You will have an ability to explain this expertise in a range of contexts and be able to withstand challenge. You may have taken supplementary training or qualifications in this area. When appropriate you may have published on aspects of your expertise and/or submitted to critical peer review.

#### **An appreciation of the context within which you deliver your expertise**

This attribute looks more widely at the organisational setting in which you work and the external environment in which you and your organisation operate and by which you and it are limited. The external environment will include political, economic, social, and technical drivers. Contextual issues may also relate to the historical background and strategic planning. There are always things on the horizon and as an environmental health practitioner you may feel that innovations or adaptations are necessary to meet changing needs.

#### **An understanding of your wider role as an Environmental Health Practitioner in contributing to public health**

In the course of your work, you will be making environmental health interventions for certain reasons and with broad health outcomes in mind. You will want these result-focused

interventions to be evidence based. With experience, you will have reflected on the extent to which you can influence and persuade to maximise the impact of those outcomes irrespective of whether you are working within a team, in partnership or individually, and regardless of the formal leadership role ascribed to you. This attribute explores perceptions of the value and impact of the activities on protecting or improving public health, or addressing health inequalities and an appreciation of the extent to which your work contributes to those objectives and how you might contribute to and increase the environmental health evidence base.

## Excellent presentation and verbal communication skills

Professionalism is judged to a large degree by how you present yourself to the external world. Good communication skills will support your credibility and consequently your ability to influence environmental health outcomes. In part 1, communication skills are demonstrated through written documentation. Part 2 provides the opportunity to provide evidence of development of personal presentation skills and both verbal and written communication skills. Throughout your formal 'presentation' and the assessment session you will want to communicate in a clear, measured and well paced way. As the structure of the assessment session is largely of your choosing, you will want to show evidence of planning and preparation and will want to answer questions and make points in a concise, engaging and understandable way.

## A professional approach to your work as an environmental health practitioner

In part 1, consideration of a professional approach was explored in the written evidence supporting attitudinal skills. However, commitment to acting in a professional manner will be explored more fully during the part 2 assessment session. You will have an understanding of what it means to be professional in the role of an environmental health practitioner, and the consequent responsibilities that you have accepted in order to sustain your integrity and achieve goals, often by using inventive, novel or imaginative approaches, maybe in the face of adversity, opposition or other difficulties. You will be an advocate and will use your attributes to influence, champion, challenge and campaign on Environmental Health issues and will have a sense of belonging to the profession and to upholding professional standards. You will demonstrate a commitment to the ethical management of self and others.

## Appendix 3

Your Portfolio should be used as a vehicle for demonstrating that you have the attributes assessed at a part 2 assessment event. You should consider the attributes both individually and as a whole and provide evidence to support your contention that you possess the attributes.

### Items that should be in your portfolio

The following is a list of some things that an assessment team will expect to find in your portfolio:

- A copy of your presentation or at least a synopsis of what you intend to talk about during your presentation.
- Your plan as to how you wish to organise the time of your assessment
- Your CV
- Your professional (and personal) development plan
- A short piece of writing that is a narrative on how you believe you are able to demonstrate the attributes. This should include references to evidence elsewhere in the portfolio, where appropriate.
- A summary matrix indicating how you believe the attributes are evidenced in the portfolio. For example:-

Attribute	Appendix 1	Appendix 2	Appendix 3	etc	etc
	Description of document	Description of document	Description of document		
	Shows:	Shows:	Shows:		
A Depth....	X	X	X	etc	etc
B Context....	X			etc	etc
C wider PH.....			X	etc	etc
D Presentation.....		X		etc	etc
E Professional approach.....	X			etc	etc

## Other items that you may wish to consider including in your portfolio:-

- Documents such as evaluation reports, minutes, press releases, excerpts from radio or TV interviews etc that illustrate the positive outcomes of work you have undertaken in your chosen area of expertise.
- Documents, such as reports, presentations, synopses of published works that demonstrate the depth of your chosen area of expertise, rather than merely demonstrating the breadth of your experience as an EHP.
- Your employee appraisal documentation
- Examples of work you have produced, or substantially driven, to support any of the attributes.
- Any of your own published papers or web links to these.
- Testimonials or references