



Case Study: CEng

James Harley



Hello, my name is James Harley CEng MINCOSE. I am currently a Systems Engineer at bp pulse, where I apply a Systems Engineering approach to product development of electric vehicle charging equipment and infrastructure.

I help define the engineering development process as well as setting up and managing the requirements management tool. I enjoy working on complex technical and organisational problems and applying Model Based Systems Engineering to help solve these problems!

Some of my achievements include working on and contributing to the systems design of complex defence projects, my Systems Engineering Degree BEng (Hons), my two daughters, and my recently acquired allotment!

In five years' time I would like to be seen as a key contributor to INCOSE UK working groups, become a CSEP and have a well-established Systems Engineering team and approach within bp pulse.

Congratulations on gaining your professional registration with INCOSE UK. What inspired you to apply?

I wanted to be recognised as a professional competent engineer with the added affiliation to INCOSE UK, which represents my profession of which I am proud to be a systems engineer.

How did you find the application process through INCOSE UK?

Straightforward to use the online portal to capture the documentation, as well as very responsive and supportive communication with the INCOSE UK Professional Development team. I was also provided an excellent professional accreditation advisor who helped me understand the application process, and frame my answers in the best possible way to demonstrate my competence

Was it challenging to document all the workplace evidence required for the CEng application and did it take a long time?

It was slightly harder as I had never kept a detailed log of all the work that I had done over the previous nine years, so I would highly recommend to any engineers at the start of their career to try and keep this up to date. However, actually racking my brains and thinking about everything I had done over my career took a few hours across a couple of weekends to brain-dump and then sanitise my experience.

How easy was it to track down references in support of your CEng application?

It was quite easy and I didn't have to look far as they were existing colleagues I had worked with for years; they also didn't have to be systems engineers either.

How long did the application process take?

From initial submission to CEng accreditation took about 7 months, this also included a rework period where the assessors thought I could strengthen my application in a few areas.

How did you find the professional review interview?

Very enjoyable! It was more of a chat with like-minded engineering professionals, where I was able to discuss the thought processes I took to achieve certain competencies.

In what way has registration benefited your career?

It has given me the confidence to know that what I have been doing is good Systems Engineering, and the approaches I take to problem solving are considered best practice.

Do you have future plans to support others in the professional registration process?

I am planning to set up a professional registration mentoring scheme at my current company, and always have an open-door policy for any colleagues (current or previous) where I am happy to help or advise on their professional registration journey.

Finally, what advice would you give to future INCOSE UK CEng applicants?

You probably have all the right skills and experience; the tricky bit is writing in such a way that it comes across clearly to the assessors! Also, like most other things once you start its better to commit some time to complete the application rather than letting it go over many weeks/months. And don't be disheartened if your application requires some further work, it will either act as prompt to rethink how you have written something, or as a guide on to what area of competency you need to focus on in your day job.