



Case Study: CEng

Paul Adams



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I found the road to becoming a Systems Engineer happened subtly over time, having started my career as a Physicist. After some time developing as a Systems Engineer, I studied for a Master's degree in Systems Engineering and became the 2014 winner of the Cranfield University SEDC prize for 'Most Outstanding Student and Distinctive Performance'. I then went on to teach Systems Engineering at a Masters level whilst working as a University Lecturer, specialising in teaching Model-Based Systems Engineering and System Thinking, becoming a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. I have built up over 20 years of experience as a Systems Engineer practitioner and educator of Systems Engineering, having worked within Government, Industry, and Academia in the UK since 2001.

I enjoy continuous development and learning, and I have been an INCOSE Certified Systems Engineering Professional (CSEP) since 2015 and this year I am very proud to have reached the standard of Chartered Engineer through INCOSE. I have recently completed a PGCert in Electronic Engineering from the University of Surrey and will soon start another MSc in Satellite Communications, also at the University of Surrey. I set up a consultancy company in 2017 called Model Answer UK Ltd (the name is a nod to my University Lecturing days) and I have enjoyed the range of opportunities that I have been given to apply Systems Engineering and Thinking on different types of system, at different stages of the system lifecycle. I have worked with large and small companies, working on large engineering programmes, as well as small projects.

Congratulations on gaining INCOSE UK Chartered Engineer (CEng) title. What inspired you to become professionally registered?

I have aspired to become a Chartered Engineer my whole career. There are two reasons for this I think, one is that I remember the day that my Dad was recognised as a Chartered Engineer and I remember the pride he

had in reaching that standard. The second reason is pride in my career experience, in that it is recognised by peers that I have developed and demonstrated competencies at the standard of a Chartered Engineer.

How did you find the application process? Was it challenging to document all your work experience and did it take a long time?

The application process would have been daunting but I was lucky to have been appointed by a very supportive Professional Registration Adviser (PRA) through INCOSE UK, Peter Moore. INCOSE UK also provided helpful guidance in how to develop the application and I worked with Peter to ensure that the application brought out the competences that I have demonstrated through my career. I documented my experience and evidence against each of the UK SPEC competencies, this made it fairly straightforward and easy to manage alongside other commitments.

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

As I work for my own company rather than working for a larger company on a permanent basis, this would normally have been quite a difficult part of the process. However, I was lucky enough to have continued to work with a few other experienced engineers who kindly offered to be a supporter of my application.

Tell us about your experience of the assessment process?

The process was initially quite daunting and for this reason I have put off applying for far too long! However, I have an initial call with Peter (my appointed PRA) and started a bullet point list of evidence against each of the competences required. This made it easy to answer each part with a few examples where I have demonstrated the required competencies. The application form was relatively straightforward, and the CPD plan was easy because I always keep my CPD up to date for CSEP.

In what ways has registration benefitted your career?

It is relatively new, having only just obtained registration as a Chartered Engineer. For me, it is a matter of personal pride that I have reached this stage as it is something that I have aspired to achieve since I was young and my Father had been made a Chartered Engineer.

How does your employer benefit from your professional registration?

Ultimately, it shows that you are a professional and are able to demonstrate the competencies expected of a Chartered Engineer. Therefore, any employer will benefit from their staff attaining the recognised status, particularly when dealing with external clients.

Do you participate in any other career-related activities, such as mentoring, volunteering or membership of other engineering groups?

I have mentored at points within my career and have volunteered for INCOSE UK groups previously. My aim is to find more time for volunteering activities and participation in INCOSE. I am also a member of the IET and so attend local and online events from both IET and INCOSE.

Is there any advice you would pass on to someone considering professional registration?

My advice for anyone considering undertaking their professional registration with INCOSE would be to consider the benefits that INCOSE provides to Systems Engineers and whether your current professional body is able to offer the same. I chose to go through the process with INCOSE because it is the natural home for Systems Engineers and I found that achieving CSEP has helped my career and helped me to focus on CPD as a major part of my career planning. Ultimately, I chose to have both CSEP and CEng awards through INCOSE in recognition of the good work that INCOSE does for Systems Engineering in general. For anyone just starting the application process, I would advise getting an INCOSE UK PRA as soon as possible! I would also recommend keeping track of CPD and familiarising themselves with the UK SPEC Competencies and start recording evidence.

Find out more about CEng and Professional Registration on the [INCOSE UK website](#).