

## Professional Assessment of Competence

### *What is Professional Assessment of Competence (PAC)?*

PAC is an alternative route into membership of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Other routes include:

- ▶ Academic - study with a college or university with assessment by examination
- ▶ Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (ACPL)
- ▶ NVQs in Management, Personnel or Learning & Development at Level 5

### *Who is suitable for the PAC route?*

Human Resource professionals who have at least 5 years of management experience and 3 of those years should be in Human Resources.

It may be that only part of the PAC programme is required. This would be discussed and agreed early on.

### *What is the process?*

- ▶ An initial discussion with one of our advisors to explain the process and discuss the CIPD Professional Standards.
- ▶ Preparation by the potential PAC candidate for a diagnostic interview. Documents will need to be brought to the diagnostic interview. These are:
  - ★ An up to date CV
  - ★ A current job description
  - ★ An organisation chart
  - ★ A completed CIPD PAC application form
  - ★ A completed Cullen Scholefield enrolment form
- ▶ Diagnostic interview to:
  - ★ Confirm the Specialist and Generalist Electives
  - ★ Identify potential sources of evidence and current (no more than 2 years ago) experience
  - ★ Discuss potential topics for the Management Research Report

The diagnostic interview will end with a decision not to proceed or it will move into an action planning phase.

An action plan will be drawn up to identify a target end date. This can depend on the route chosen by the PAC candidate. The Fast Track Route or the Executive Route. Each route requires three activities to be undertaken in parallel. These are:

- ▶ Work on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) by drawing up a CPD Plan projecting forward for the year ahead and regularly making entries into a CPD Record. In an effort to support our candidates we ask that the CPD Record is sent in on a monthly basis.
- ▶ Decide on a suitable topic for a Management Research Report (MRR). Ideally this should be on a topic that needs to be looked into. It is really a feasibility study as it ends with recommendations and an implementation plan. We find that if our candidates select a topic that needs to be carried out at work they are more likely to “give themselves permission” to work on this during the normal course of their daily work.
- ▶ Identify evidence to support their claim to competence. This is likely to be a range of things such as policies, Board papers, presentations, briefing documents, monthly reports and sometimes eMails and letters. This provides the assessor with an audit trail to follow.
- ▶ Candidates need to prepare for an assessment interview. This will take place at their place of work. During the interview the assessor will:
  - ★ ask the candidate to explain how the audit trail presented meets the operational indicators of the professional standards
  - ★ ask questions to check that the candidate has the necessary knowledge listed in the knowledge indicators of the professional standards
  - ★ write a report on the assessment process

#### **FAST TRACK and EXECUTIVE ROUTE**

The **Executive Route** buys less time with the adviser. This route is excellent for all candidates who wish to take a steady pace to achieve CIPD membership. Candidates are supported by their adviser via telephone and eMail. The typical time frame for this route is nine to twelve months.

The **Fast Track Route** buys additional time with the adviser. The adviser will carry out professional discussions and help the candidate to present their evidence for final assessment. This additional support speeds up the process and candidates can achieve in a three to four month time frame.

Internal verification now takes place. This vital quality assurance role is not an end process - it happens throughout the candidates' journey to completion of the PAC Route.

The internal verifier:

- ★ may meet candidates, observe parts of the advisory or assessment process and either telephone or eMail candidates to gather feedback
- ★ audits the assessment process by reading the assessment report and checking the evidence produced
- ★ completes an internal verification report and recommends that the completed assessment report is forwarded to CIPD

External verification is a CIPD process. External verifiers are appointed by CIPD to quality assure and monitor the work carried out by Cullen Scholefield.

The external verifier may:

- ★ sample candidates' evidence or Management Research Reports

★ talk to candidates about the PAC programme