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1. Background

The modern work place and what it means to be professional is constantly evolving [1,2,3]:

- globalisation has meant that work is more interconnected and network-oriented. Employees (and employers) will require the competencies to work across different disciplines, to collaborate virtually, and to demonstrate cultural sensitivity [1],
- the work place is becoming increasingly multi-generational, with four generations working side-by-side [1],
- the world of work is increasingly more flexible and from this employees expected to be self-motivated and therefore take more responsibility for skills development and a “personal brand”,
- diversity of thought at leadership level has been shown to lead to more inclusive workplaces and thus contributing to a more successful company performance [2].

However, recently published papers and a cross institution benchmark highlight that institutions have fallen behind the curve (compared to industry) in embodying the aspiration of what it is to be a “modern” working professional within this evolving environment [2,3]. In particular, diversity and inclusion which promotes openly innovative integrated working environments has now almost become standard working practice in industry leading companies.

2. Issue

Professional institutions historically embodied best practice sharing and are the “*esprit de corps*” of a discipline. However, current standards do not explicitly require demonstration of working with diverse teams and or promoting an inclusive culture (for instance within E5 of UK spec) [4,5]. Beyond this, a registered professional as a leader in their discipline sets the culture within those disciplines and therefore organisations in which they work. As an example, when focusing just on compliance and protected characteristics (Equalities Act 2010 [6]) there is increasingly more evidence published on the challenges in the workplace produced due to the divide between the current standards and workplace trends discussed in the background. Notably:

- the engineering industry is losing a potential £11.2 billion due to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) engineers remaining in the closet resulting from a 30% reduction in productivity due to inauthenticity at work [2,7],
- there is a lack of aspiration for an increasingly diverse society. Chief executive of Science council: *‘It is our responsibility to make sure every child and young adult can see someone like them doing well in science. We start with ourselves. As Marian Wright Edelman said “You can’t be what you can’t see.”* [3],
- on average women comprise 13% of institute membership compared with 5.2% of the professional engineering register [3],
- majority of bodies have no data on disability [3],
- few institutions are reporting concrete plans to extend the scope of their work on diversity and inclusion [3].

3. Proposal

We propose that rather than inclusivity being an ‘add-on’ or just requiring awareness or just because it is the law... it should be just the right thing to do as a professionally registered leader*. In particular, the image of what it is to be professionally registered as an aspiring early career engineer or scientist should be as forward thinking and evolve as quickly as the disciplines themselves. From this, we would like to implicitly embed inclusiveness into registration criteria by:

* Professional Registration is for anyone who can meet the professional competencies at the Technical, Incorporated or Chartered levels within their profession (EngTech, IEng or CEng for engineers).

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- requiring explicit demonstration of working with “diverse” and inclusive teams (through adding D&I to E5 in the UK spec for instance),
- professional bodies setting the tone across professions to effectively eliminate the historical ‘glass ceiling’,
- as part of registration, requiring demonstration of working with truly diverse teams, across disciplines and thinking,
- reviewing ethics and considering a set of inclusive “values” for institutions and councils for current and new members to sign up to [see 8,9].

4. Objectives

We seek to ensure that a profession properly reflects the society it serves and takes action to attract people from increasingly diverse backgrounds into professional membership and registration (Equality Act 2010 [6]). In this way the profession can capitalise on their diversity of thought, innovation and creativity. We would like to:

- encourage D&I to be explicitly written into UK Spec (E5) through engagement with institute members and fellows,
- workshop best practice from relevant stakeholders and to enable transfer of innovation from industry to institutions in terms of D&I best practice based on experience,
- help develop best practice guidance for institutions to be used when undertaking a review of professional registration ethics and UK-Spec standards, based on industry experience [see 6],
- enable rewriting of UK spec to put inclusive aspiration into the heart of what it is to be professionally registered.

5. References/further reading

1. **UKCES report: The future of work jobs and skills in 2030** -
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/303335/the_future_of_work_key_findings_edit.pdf
2. **InterEngineering paper** -
<http://interengineeringlgbt.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Engineering-Action-Tackling-Homophobia-in-Engineering.pdf>
3. **Collaborative institute benchmarks** -
<https://www.raeng.org.uk/policy/diversity-in-engineering/professional-engineering-institutions>
<https://sciencecouncil.org/web/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Scientific-Bodies-Benchmarking-Report-2017-FINAL.pdf>
4. **UK standard for professional engineering competence** -
[https://www.engc.org.uk/engcdocuments/internet/website/UK-SPEC%20third%20edition%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.engc.org.uk/engcdocuments/internet/website/UK-SPEC%20third%20edition%20(1).pdf)
5. **Institute of Physics chartership guidelines** –
http://www.iop.org/membership/char-sta/chartership/cphys/file_70981.pdf
6. **Equalities Act 2010** -
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>
7. **The surprising ways inauthenticity at work is hurting you** -
<https://www.fastcompany.com/3054485/the-surprising-ways-inauthenticity-at-work-is-hurting-you>
8. **RAEng guidelines** -
<https://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/other/diversity-guidelines>
9. **RAEng Concordat** -
<https://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/other/engineering-diversity-concordat>

