Position Statement on the link between Assessment Entry and Membership

Introduction
Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) is an Awarding Body regulated by Ofqual, the qualification regulator for England and Northern Ireland. The Awarding Body is committed to high levels of quality assurance and policies that are open, transparent and free from bias.

CIPS is recognised as the largest and most prestigious purchasing and supply membership body in the world, with professional standards that are second to none and a qualification programme that is universally appreciated as being best in the sector.

Candidates for CIPS’ examinations and assessments are required to join the Institute as a student member. CIPS believes that this requirement is important because:

1. Student members have full access to a wide range of benefits at a reduced subscription rate during their course of study that enhances the learner experience and assists in preparation for assessments. These benefits include access to CIPS’ substantial ‘body of knowledge’, online study resources, and copies of Supply Management magazine.

2. CIPS members sign up to a code of ethics that underpins the professional conduct and integrity that is expected of learners as well as qualified professionals.

3. The estimated lifetime economic benefit associated with holding professional qualifications and membership of a professional institute is approximately £152,000 in today’s money terms. This is comprised of £81,000 from holding professional qualifications, and £71,000 from holding membership of a professional institute. Establishing this link between qualifications and membership at the earliest stage is deemed to be of critical importance.

4. Employers place a high value on the skills provided by professional bodies. Individuals in possession of professional qualifications and holding membership of a professional body have an increased likelihood of being employed, according to research. It is therefore to the benefit of aspiring entrants to the profession to be members of CIPS at the point where their journey towards future employment begins.

5. Recognised parallel routes exist between levels of qualifications and levels of membership, allowing learners to see clearly the routes to full membership available to them.

6. The CIPS ladder of qualifications supported by membership grades has opened up new opportunities specifically in the international corporate market place. Access to student membership of a professional institute as part of the study process is highly valued by learners overseas.

7. Membership of CIPS is an on-going commitment to lifelong learning and professional development, with CPD available to all members.

From time to time CIPS canvasses its customers in relation to the qualifications/membership link. There is considerable support from employers and CIPS branches for maintaining the link. CIPS will continue to test this view in the future. In the meantime the available evidence indicates that continuing to package qualifications with membership is appropriate.

Kate Bell
Head of the Awarding Body

Position statement on the link between assessment entry & membership F2.2 May 2012