



A GUIDE FOR ORGANISATIONS SEEKING VALIDATION FOR LEARNING PROGRAMMES MEETING THE CIH SPECIFICATION FOR CHARTERED MEMBERSHIP (CIHCM).

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1 Introduction

This guide and the regulations contained within it replace all previous guidelines and regulations relating to the professional qualification of the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). It is designed to provide programme leaders and centre managers with a comprehensive document which sets out what the validation process aims to achieve and how it will be implemented. Centres which may have special requirements or seek further clarification to this guide should contact CIH Education staff who will be happy to discuss individual questions.

In 2014 CIH undertook a review of the specification for Chartered membership (CIHCM). The aim of the review was to enable more pathways to CIHCM, opening up new routes which recognise not only academic ability but previous experience in a housing environment. The review also wanted to make Chartered membership relevant to a wider audience of housing professionals to include those who work in the growing range of housing services. To achieve this CIH has identified core learning outcomes which set the foundations for all Chartered members but these can be built into a range of learning programmes, from traditional undergraduate and post graduate qualifications to new level 5 (level 8 in Scotland) qualifications and to include recognition of prior work experience (see appendix 1 for the specification for CIHCM).

Included in this strategy is the opportunity to validate components of qualifications which contain elements of housing. Many undergraduate and post graduate qualifications contain housing units which meet some of the CIH outcomes for CIHCM. These can be validated and provide the learner with the opportunity to take a shortened programme to obtain full Chartered membership at a later date. CIH will ensure that there are flexible learning routes available to meet any shortfall from a partially validated programme.

We want also to move the focus of the specification to raise the importance of housing related skills and professional behaviours. We want to set a benchmark for Chartered membership which demonstrates that a Chartered member not only has relevant and up to date knowledge but can use this by applying a range of appropriate skills and behaviours in a professional manner. This includes working to the CIH code of conduct and ethics and committing to a programme of continuing professional development (CPD). CIH will be setting in place a more robust CPD requirement which links directly to Chartered status.

2 CIH Validation

CIH validates programmes to achieve the following aims:

- To ensure appropriate staffing and other physical resources are available to support the learning programmes.
- To ensure that the teaching content, delivery and assessment meet nationally recognised standards.
- To ensure that the learning programmes are relevant to housing practice and that appropriate liaison with practice is in place.
- To ensure that students achieve the understanding, knowledge, skills and standards of professional conduct which meet some or all the learning outcomes of the CIH specification for CIHCM.
- To work with recognised educational institutions to exploit the combined benefits of academic and practical expertise in the pursuit of excellence in housing management.

2.1 CIH regulations for CIHCM

CIH has approved the following regulations which apply to the delivery of qualifications which lead to or contribute to Chartered membership:

- Qualifications or parts of qualifications will be approved only at centres which can demonstrate the quality demanded by a recognised degree awarding institution. The quality standards can be referenced to QAA guidelines for non-university institutions.
- Students must achieve all the relevant learning outcomes specified by the CIH for full membership.
- Individual students may achieve the learning outcomes in a shorter period of time than the validated programme through accreditation of previous experience and/or qualifications.
- 'Fast Track' programmes may be approved where the enrolment conditions recruit students who have already achieved some of the learning outcomes through 'cognate' degrees or experience.

- The final approved qualification will be delivered and assessed at a minimum of level 5 of an undergraduate programme (Scottish level 8) or equivalent.
- The approved centre must appoint a Housing Practitioner external examiner, who is a Chartered member of CIH, in addition to an academic examiner.

2.2 Validation of centres and programmes

CIH will be approving programmes in the context of the support services and quality assurance procedures provided by the institution delivering the programmes. Validation will be carried out by a panel appointed by CIH. The members of the panel will be recruited from housing practitioners, tutors from approved courses at other institutions and at least one CIH officer.

Where partial validation only is required this may be assessed without the need for a validation visit. A separate guide and application form is provided for partial validation – please contact CIH Education at Validations@cih.org

2.3 The validation process

The validation process will involve communications with a CIH officer, followed by a one day event at the centre. Typically, the process will be as follows:

- CIH or the centre will make contact for revalidation or for validation of a new programme or part of a programme.
- A CIH officer may visit a new centre to explain CIH requirements or agree a date for revalidation for an existing programme.
- CIH recruits the Panel for the visit.
- All validation documentation relating to the programme(s) to be submitted to CIH at least **6 weeks** before the event date.
- 2 weeks before the event a briefing paper and a copy of the documents go to the panel.
- Event takes place normally over one day.
- A letter is sent confirming the decision, conditions and recommendations to the centre within 2 weeks. Included in the letter is a list of CIH and centre commitments which is signed and dated by the centre representative and the relevant CIH officer.

- Copy of the final validation report, approved by Panel, is sent to the centre within 2 months.

3 Programme documentation

Using the learning outcomes specified by the CIH, institutions are free to design programmes in a way which they consider to be appropriate to meet their customers' needs. **Programme leaders are strongly advised to consult with the relevant CIH officer in the planning of their programmes before documents are written or major design changes are introduced.** (Appendix 2 provides indicative content for the knowledge outcomes of the specification. Appendix 3 provides guidance on the CIH skills requirements and Appendix 4 provides guidance on the CIH code of ethics).

The programme document(s) should contain the following information:

3.01 Title of the programme(s): CIH will formally record the title of the qualification and any specified pathway or combination of units. This title will activate membership and will therefore need to be clearly identified with CIH approval. Where centres develop non-CIH validated housing programmes the title of these programmes should be distinct and not confused with the validated programme.

3.02 Aims and objectives of the programme(s): The centre should set out the principle aims and objectives of the programme(s). These will be used throughout the validation as a central reference point for the panel. This establishes the broad context of the submission and enables the panel to take an overview of the programme and what it is trying to achieve.

3.03 Programme context: This will explain the faculty or school structure and the range of programmes offered by the centre. You should explain how the housing programme(s) has evolved since the last validation and what has been done to develop the programme(s) in the light of changes in practice, the conditions/recommendations of the previous validation report and ongoing programme evaluation.

3.04 Admissions and enrolment policy: The centre will have a policy on how students are enrolled onto the programme(s), including entry criteria, and how the student group is targeted. The document will explain how the centre's equality and diversity policy is being adhered to in practice and how under represented groups are encouraged to apply. The centre will be expected to provide statistical information on previous cohorts of students with an indication of gender balance and ethnicity. For centres offering post - graduate programmes the document must confirm the centre's use of 'cognacy' in the identification of relevant first degrees.

3.05 Programme management: The submission document should set out how the programme is managed; this includes the names of the programme leaders and people with special responsibility for resources and curriculum leadership. Most centres will have a committee structure with representation from students, staff, senior managers, librarian and employers. We would expect to see how students and employers contribute to the programme together with the responsibilities of staff for responding to their demands.

3.06 Programme structure: It is normal for the document to include a diagram setting out the units/modules to be covered in each year of the programme including the unit titles and the CATS points. Information on the relationship between units, progression and the identification of core and option units should be clearly set out. Programme units should be specified in the individual 'house' styles of the institutions and include syllabus, level, assessment method and key texts. The validation panel will be concentrating on the total programme content and whether the proposed structures meet the CIH learning outcomes in terms of coherence and progression.

3.07 Programme content: The CIH Specification for CIHCM has been written in the form of learning expectations (see Appendix 1). These 'expectations' have been deliberately designed to offer guidance and direction but not to over specify the content of the programmes. CIH recognises that each institution will have its own expertise and will have themes which reflect the needs of the local area and academic staff. This is welcomed and encouraged and should sit comfortably with CIH expectations for CIHCM.

3.08 Timetable: A timetable will provide information on the demands on students, in particular part - time students. It is important to consider the time of classes starting and finishing if students have to travel long distances or required to travel home late at night.

3.09 Assessment strategy: The assessment strategy will provide information on the number of assignments, the type of assessment e.g. essay, case study, examination, and the loading of assessment throughout the programme. In addition the assignments should specify which of the programme learning outcomes the assignments are testing. From this information it should be possible to determine whether the learning outcomes are being tested through the assignment programme. An assessment strategy should provide the overview to the panel on whether it will deliver the proposed learning outcomes set out in the CIH specification.

You will need to refer to your own assessment regulations where these indicate how the assessment process is monitored to ensure an appropriate balance of assignments and maintenance of a standard assessment system. Sample assignments should be provided to give the panel a flavour of the type of assignment the students will be required to undertake.



3.10 Staff CVs/Research profiles: The staffing for the programme(s) will be drawn from a wide range of different backgrounds and this will support the nature of housing courses as a cross curriculum discipline. However there is a need to ensure that there are staff who have had experience in housing practice. This person(s) will normally be the programme leader and will have either a research record in housing and/or extensive contacts in practice. In addition CIH will need to be assured that the institution has sufficient staff with appropriate expertise to deliver all the learning outcomes. This will involve expertise from law, construction, finance, social sciences and management studies. Many centres will employ housing practitioners on part-time teaching contracts which are encouraged and help maintain the employment links and brings the programme up to date information on current practice. Part-time staff should be given adequate support and inducted into the relevant teaching programmes and methodologies.

It is a requirement of CIH that centres provide at least **one full-time staff member with CIH membership** and have a commitment to develop and/or appoint additional staff with practical experience in housing as student numbers increase.

3.11 Employer liaison: All centres should have employer liaison meetings and/or regular contact with local employers. Many centres do experience difficulties attracting employer representatives to attend meetings and often have to design special events/seminars. Evidence of close employer liaison is important to ensure that the centre is providing a programme which meets not only the CIH specification but meets the more specialised needs of local housing practitioners.

3.12 Library and Information Technology services: This section will normally describe the location and stock levels of books and periodicals, types of software and types of machines available. In view of the descriptive nature of the information, evaluation of this area is normally carried out by a tour of the facilities.

3.13 Equality and diversity: Equality and diversity is a key consideration in the validation process. Policies and strategies relating to physical access, admissions policy, monitoring of students and staff, curriculum design, must be included in the programme document or appended to it.

3.14 Quality Assurance: The centre will have in place quality assurance procedures and systems. These will include the use of questionnaires to students, programme committee meetings, and external examiner reports. Institutions should include copies of internal reports, programme committee minutes, external examiner reports and any additional information relating to the quality maintenance of the programme(s).

3.15 APL/APEL systems: *Accreditation of Prior Learning* and *Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning* are processes which are becoming more established in Universities and colleges. CIH

encourages the use of APL and is happy for the internal procedures of the institution to be used. APEL is more complex and requires previous work experience to be accredited. This process is still being developed and often involves complicated processes to translate experience into learning outcomes. Again CIH encourages the use of APEL but requires institutions to submit their systems for approval to ensure that they are sufficiently thorough and rigorous. Programme documentation may well include the internal procedures and rules governing accreditation.

3.16 Pastoral Care: The University /College should have in place a number of services available to students. These will include a personal tutorial system, counselling service and health and accommodation services which should be explained in the document. The needs of part-time students are particularly relevant to housing programmes and CIH will need to be satisfied that the institutions are addressing these needs.

3.17 Marketing: You will have a number of formal and informal contacts with practice and these contacts will provide the majority of student enrolments. CIH will, however, need to look at the strategy the centre uses in addition to these contacts to market the programme(s) widely, particularly to groups who may be under represented.

3.18 Supporting Information: Each centre is requested to provide information on the areas listed above; however institutions may wish to provide additional information such as the internal regulations on assessment, details on modular frameworks, etc. If the centre is in doubt as to the need for information it is advisable to contact the CIH officer.

3.19 CIH Membership: All students on validated programmes are entitled to Membership of the CIH. The Panel will be looking to see that the centre encourages students to join the CIH.

3.20 Critical review (for revalidation events only): This critical review should include the following aspects:

- Enrolment data; numbers, gender, ethnicity, previous qualifications.
- A review of the validated programme(s) in terms of structure, content assessment and resources.
- Information collected from internal quality assurance systems.

4 The validation event

This will normally be conducted over one full day unless it is more practical to meet over two days. CIH will also consider a joint validation event and will be happy to agree a format and timetable which meets both the Institution's objectives and those of CIH.

4.01 Panel Visit

The Panel Visit will focus on evaluating comments and feedback from a number of groups. These will be current students, ex-students and employer representatives. The CIH is aware that there are difficulties in bringing people together to attend events such as the validation especially where students are drawn from long distances. Our experience to date is that attendance at validation events by employers and ex students is generally minimal and although the feedback from individuals who attend is valuable it is often based on a small sample. To address this issue and to reduce the time required for the panel to meet we encourage centres to gather feedback from employers and ex students before the validation event and send this to CIH for consideration by the panel prior to the meeting.

4.02 Itinerary of the Panel Visit

Viewing the physical resources offered by each institution is becoming less relevant to a mode of delivery which is, increasingly, provided via web based platforms. However it is useful for the panel to see the physical resources of each institution where this is still relevant to classroom based delivery and to see a sample of online resources and services available to students.

Once the panel has completed the initial tour of resources and/or viewed online resources the programme leader(s) is required to make a short presentation to the panel which provides an overview of the critical review and updates the panel on any developments since the review and when the programme document was written. This will also provide the panel with the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any issues relating to the programmes (s).

The final ingredients of the visit will be to spend time with the programme teachers and managers and to speak to current students. This will provide a rounded picture of the programme(s) from which the panel can make the validation decision. This decision will be provided at the conclusion of the visit and will be sent in writing within several days of the visit.

It is important that the CIH panel has contact not only with the programme team and students but that there is a senior member of the centre staff available who can meet the panel and respond to any resource issues. This person may be the Head of Faculty or in a similar role.

The panel will require a room which can act as a base room for the visit to be used for private meetings and, ideally, be large enough for meetings with the various groups.



Draft Timetable for Accreditation Visits

Panel arrives at	10:00
Introductions then Private meeting of the panel	10.15 – 10.45
Presentation by Course Leader and discussions with course team	10.45 – 12.00
Tour of resources	12.00 – 12.30
Lunch and meeting with students	12.30 – 13.15
Meeting with employers	13.15 – 14.00
Meeting with centre managers	14.00 – 14.45
Private meeting of the panel	14.45
Feedback to Course Leader	15.15
Panel departs	16.00

This timetable is for guidance purposes only and can be adjusted to meet local conditions and arrangements.

5 Validation outcomes

The panel will:

- Make the validation decision to approve or not to approve.
- To set the period of approval, (no longer than 5 years).
- Identify and explain any conditions to the validation decision.
- To identify and explain any recommendations for the centre to consider.



6 Fees and expenses

6.01. Annual Fees: All full and partially approved centres will receive membership for all students registered on the validated programmes. Where specific pathways are approved or the programme is partially validated free membership is limited to those students who have made an explicit commitment to a career in housing. This may need negotiating with CIH. In addition centres will receive one free copy of all CIH publications and the opportunity to exhibit at the annual CIH Conference in Manchester (subject to availability). Fully validated centres will also be able to award an annual £100.00 prize to a student of their choice.

Fully validated centres will be required to pay an annual fee for student membership and the support package (invoiced during September each year). The annual fee will vary according to the level of validation and the number of students receiving membership.

Annual fee for a centre with less than 100 students	£1000 plus vat
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Annual fee for a centre with more than 100 students but less than 250	£1500 plus vat
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Annual fee for a centre with more than 250 students	£2000 plus vat
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Centres with a partially validated programme(s) will be charged on a sliding scale of fees according to the length of validation required. Details of these fees can be found in the separate application form.

6.02 Validation expenses: Where a validation panel carries out a visit to a centre all the travel, any accommodation and subsistence expenses will be met by the centre. CIH will endeavour to keep these costs to a minimum and agree any overnight accommodation arrangements with the centre before the panel visit. CIH will pay the expenses of the panel members and then add CIH staff expenses to an invoice which will then be sent to the centre.

CIH Contacts

For general guidance on the validation procedures and advice on programme structures/content/regulations please e-mail Validations@cih.org.



Appendix 1

Specification for Chartered Membership

From day one a Chartered member of CIH will be able to:

1. Maximise the positive impact of their work on individuals and communities.
2. Deliver services that are designed to maximise the positive impact on customers.
3. Work with partners to improve effectiveness.
4. Contribute to the profession, sharing experience and supporting innovation.
5. Communicate effectively - taking care to select the right style and method for the audience.
6. Have an ethical approach to their work - using the CIH ethical framework when faced with dilemmas.
7. Ensure that they have the right skills and knowledge for the job - scanning the horizon to predict future challenges and preparing effectively.
8. Embrace non-discriminatory practice and challenge behaviour which works against equality and diversity principles of good practice.
9. Support initiatives for delivering services which are socially responsible.
10. Promote and engage with policies and processes which conserve resources and support sustainable development.

In order to deliver this a Chartered member will need to:

Know	Be able to	Demonstrate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The background to the provision and access to housing in the UK. • How housing is delivered and regulated through those organisations set up to achieve this. • Why good housing is critical to the health and well being of a community. • The social, cultural, economic, legal and political context in which housing services are delivered and monitored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively with housing customers and colleagues. • Find out what housing customers demand, who housing customers are and what housing organisations can deliver. • Support housing customers in securing homes and the resources to maintain their homes. • Talk to, understand and work with those who deliver and design related services which impact on housing. • Lead, provide vision and innovate in meeting objectives for an organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making based on fair, accurate and appropriate information. • Impartiality in delivering a service. • Non - discrimination in his/her attitudes to delivering a service. • Working according to the CIH code of professional conduct. • Continuing professional development through a personal development plan to build, maintain and learn new skills and knowledge. • A belief in the objectives of delivering affordable, good quality homes to all in need. • Honesty and integrity

Appendix 2

Indicative content

Below is a guide to centres on the knowledge content of the three core areas for housing.

1. CONTEXT OF HOUSING

- Historical development of affordable housing
- Social and economic objectives associated with housing organisations
- Culture and diversity of residents and the wider community
- Legal and regulatory frameworks
- Housing policy
- Economic context of housing
- Social context of housing

2. DELIVERING THE HOUSING SERVICE

- Customer service for housing
- Managing people
- Change management
- Partnership working at the operational level
- How housing organisations support economic and community development
- Involvement of service-users (tenants, 'customers') in the development of policy/procedure and in scrutinising services

3. HOUSING AS A BUSINESS

- Organisational structures
- Corporate strategies and business plans
- Partnership working at the strategic level
- Human resource management
- Governance and accountability
- Relationship with regulators
- Finance and risk management
- Leadership

4. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

- Critical awareness of the similarities and differences between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- Regional differences within countries of the UK.
- Sustainability in relation to climate, place and community.

Appendix 3

Skills statement

Centres offering a CIH validated qualification will need to demonstrate an overall skills strategy and an indicative mapping of where skills are developed within the curriculum. CIH has identified the following skills required of a Chartered member. These skills can be divided into 4 categories:

<p>Personal and Professional skills <i>These are the personal and professional skills the CIH expects of a Chartered member</i></p>	<p>Ethical understanding Non-discriminatory practice Self-reliance Improve learning and performance Problem solving Presentation skills Written skills Reflective practice</p>
<p>People skills <i>These skills are required when working with others</i></p>	<p>Flexibility Negotiation Active listening Conflict management Inclusive working Understanding others</p>
<p>Strategic skills <i>These skills are required when managing and delivering change</i></p>	<p>Creativity Leadership Enterprise Risk taking Forming strategy Change management Asset management Adaptability</p>
<p>Practical skills <i>These skills are required to the deliver projects or services</i></p>	<p>Project management Performance monitoring Financial awareness Application of number Using IT for housing</p>

Appendix 4

Code of Ethics for Housing Professionals

Housing is a values-based profession. Working in housing puts professionals in a position of trust in relation to their customers, employers and the public who rely on them to make professional judgements. Most people working in housing were attracted to the profession by the opportunities to improve people’s lives through the places in which they live. The principles outlined below represent a profession-wide shared view of the ethical standards that are expected of others working within housing and related sectors. The principles provide a guide for behaviour where there are no specific rules in place in a particular circumstance and assist members to recognise and resolve ethical issues and value conflicts. Members are expected to integrate these principles into every aspect of their professional behaviour.

Principle	Self evaluation questions
Respect for others This means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be fair in all dealings • Demonstrate a commitment to equality and diversity and treating people fairly • Be courteous, willing to listen to others, speaking to people in a way they can understand by appreciating their circumstances • Make judgements based on your professional rather than your personal opinion • Respect other’s confidential information • Take responsibility for yourself and your work • Understand how your actions affect others and act accordingly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I challenge inappropriate, offensive or discriminatory behaviour? • Have I created unnecessary obstacles for someone by not considering their circumstances or needs? • Are my personal preferences or views influencing my behaviour or decisions? • Am I able to see things from another person’s perspective? • Do I give and receive feedback in a constructive and collegiate manner?
Act with integrity This means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and uphold your professional and legal obligations • Be open and honest in your work • Recognise conflicts of interest and ensure that your professional judgement is not compromised • Build trust in yourself, your employer/business and your profession • Honour your duty of care to your clients and customers, your colleagues, your organisation and the community in which you work and never take advantage of your position for personal gain • Follow through on your commitments • Be impartial in your treatment of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would I be happy if my actions were made public – in the press or on social media? • How does my behaviour appear to my colleagues? • Do people trust my professional judgement? If not, why not? • Am I aware of all my legal and professional obligations and if not, what do I need to do? • Do I own up to mistakes and learn from them? • Did I do what I said I was going to do? • Did I act in self-interest?
Take responsibility This means:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should I discuss my decision

- **Ensure you have all the relevant information before taking action**
- **Take the time to understand the context of the situation and the needs of the those involved**
- **Act within the scope of your competence and your role**
- **Reflect on the outcomes of your decisions and learn from them to improve your skills in the future**
- **Act in the best interests of others**
- **Ensure you consider the impact of your decisions broadly**

with others before I commit to action?

- Should I have sought help?
- Did I have the right information to make my decision?
- Have I considered the impact of my actions on all parties likely to be affected?
- Have my actions impacted negatively on others, even if unintentional?

Maintain professional competence

This means:

- **Keep your skills and knowledge up to date so that you work effectively**
- **Strive to achieve the highest personal standards**
- **Honestly assess your development needs and commit to your own personal development**
- **Take responsibility for your development and don't waiting for others to direct you**
- **Support others in their development and be an advocate for the profession**
- **Learn from your experience and share good practice as well as lessons from your mistakes**

- Do I reflect on my actions to assure myself that I am acting professionally?
- Have I made a real commitment to continuous professional development (CPD)?
- Have I maintained the standards of CIH?
- Do I rely on my manager to tell me how I should develop?

Make a difference

This means:

- **Trusting in your professional judgement and not being afraid to act**
- **Asking questions when you feel something is not right**
- **Fostering independence and empowering others to take control of their lives**
- **Challenging negative stereotypes**
- **Contributing positively to those you are responsible for, your colleagues, your organisation and the community**
- **Be an advocate for the profession**
- **Be prepared to be innovative and encourage change**

- Do I try to leave others better off?
- Do I behave in in the best interests of our clients?
- Do I lead by example?
- Do I support and encourage colleagues?
- Am I a positive representative of my organisation?
- Do I speak up when I know I should?