

## **GUIDANCE FOR MENTORS**

### **1. Background to the qualification**

The Transport Planning Professional (TPP) has been developed by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) together with the Transport Planning Society (TPS). It is based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Transport Planning developed by GoSkills and TPS and is intended to provide professional recognition for transport planners at a level that equates to that of Chartered Engineer. The TPP is managed by CIHT and TPS and administered by CIHT.

### **2. Routes to TPP**

To be eligible to achieve the TPP, Candidates must demonstrate their professional competence, which is assessed through a Portfolio of Evidence and a Professional Review (interview). However, before submitting their Portfolio of Evidence, they must first demonstrate that they have the learning outcomes that underpin the qualification. They can do this through one of four routes:

- 1) they have an approved transport Masters degree from a UK university that substantially covers the knowledge requirements set out in the Guidance Notes for Candidates
- 2) they have a UK Honours Degree (or equivalent) in any discipline and have completed a structured training scheme for transport planners
- 3) they have a UK Honours Degree (or equivalent) in any discipline and have submitted a satisfactory Portfolio of Technical Knowledge, through which they have demonstrated that they technical knowledge required for the qualification
- 4) they do not have a UK Honours degree (or its equivalent) but have substantial transport planning and management experience and have submitted a satisfactory Technical Report though which they have demonstrated that they have the required level of underpinning learning.

### **3. Practical Experience**

Candidates are likely to need at least five years' experience in transport planning and to have been engaged on a variety of transport planning projects to demonstrate the breadth and depth of competence required to gain the TPP. To demonstrate this experience, Candidates must prepare a **Portfolio of Evidence** showing how the required level of competence has been acquired and present this at a Professional Review. At the Review interview the Candidates will also be required to give a short presentation on a project or relevant topic of their choice.

#### 4. **The Role of the TPP Mentor**

We advise Candidates to find a Mentor to support them in preparing for the TPP. Candidates may have more than one Mentor if necessary to cover all of the competencies. Mentors do not need to be TPP qualified but must understand the TPP assessment requirements. They may work with the Candidate or come from outside the Candidate's employing organisation.

The TPP Mentor's role is to:

- establish, with the Candidate, whether they have sufficient transport planning experience at the right competency level to apply for the TPP
- advise on how gaps in knowledge and/or experience could be addressed;
- advise on the content and subject matter of the Candidate's TPP submission;
- provide challenges to assumptions/conclusions in the **Portfolio of Technical Knowledge, Technical Report** or **Portfolio of Evidence**;
- comment on drafts of the **Portfolio of Technical Knowledge, Technical Report** or **Portfolio of Evidence**;
- advise on interview presentation, style and technique.
- encourage the Candidate to maintain a Personal Development Plan and a CPD record.

The Mentor's key responsibilities are to advise, guide and encourage Candidates in preparing for, and achieving the TPP qualification through the process of Professional Review. In doing this, the Mentor should work with the Candidate to identify the competence levels to which qualification units are to be submitted for review. They should also assist in undertaking the SWOT analysis and in the development of the Personal Development Plan. However, Mentors must not contribute to the content of the report or be involved in the assessment process.

#### 5. **Characteristics of an effective TPP Mentor**

An effective TPP Mentor must:

- be a experienced transport planner with a wide range of experience;
- possess most of the professional skills and experience set out in the TPP competency requirements for individual subject areas;
- understand the TPP assessment process;
- take a personal interest in the Candidate;
- be sufficiently senior to be able to raise relevant issues with the Candidate's employer;
- be accessible, approachable and organised;
- be able to build relationships, listen and inspire confidence;
- be willing to learn from the Candidate, to listen, and be influenced by their ideas and enthusiasm;
- be willing to share knowledge from experience;
- provide constructive feedback based on the understanding of the assessment process;
- be objective, respectful and discrete;
- be proactive in support of the Candidate.

## 6. **Communication between Mentor and Candidate**

Communication between the Mentor and the Candidate should be based on regular face to face counselling sessions, supplemented by efficient communications. The meeting should be conveniently located where a confidential discussion can be held.

Before a meeting with a Candidate the Mentor should:

- review the notes of any previous meeting and decide on the structure for this meeting;
- have a copy of the TPP requirements available;
- confirm time and date;
- try to ensure that there will be no interruptions.

During the meeting with the Candidate the Mentor should:

- review progress, and agree target dates for the review;
- briefly summarise the notes of any previous meeting;
- update the status of actions that were agreed;
- review the Candidate's progress against the TPP requirements;
- listen attentively, encouraging the Candidate to take the lead;
- check for feelings as well as facts;
- ask open questions to test the Candidate;
- Encourage realistic expectations regarding achieving the qualification;
- build on the Candidate's own ideas;
- be honest, supportive and encouraging;
- share their thoughts and ideas with the Candidate;
- only give undertakings that you can deliver;
- take notes or ask the Candidate to do so
- summarise actions;
- agree/ revise the planned programme to Portfolio submission;
- agree the date and time of the next meeting.

During the first meeting the Mentor should check that the Candidate

- is a Member of CIHT or TPS;
- has registered with the TPP Administrator;
- is keeping a CPD record and is actively undertaking appropriate activities;
- has informed his employer and line manager;
- has the opportunity to practice presentational skills;
- has access to a specialist Mentor if needed.

After each meeting the Mentor should:

- send a brief note to the Candidate summarising actions (or delegate this to the Candidate);
- promptly do anything that they have undertaken to do for the Candidate;
- keep in touch between meetings highlighting events or topics that might be relevant and useful.

After a Professional Review Interview, the Mentor should hold a feedback session with the Candidate and identify any difficulties or short falls in the Portfolio. Whilst this is particularly relevant where Candidates have failed the Review, it would be

helpful to the TPP administration if this could be undertaken for all successful reviews as well.

## **7. Mentor Training & Support**

Mentors will be given initial training and will have access to advice and support from the TPP Administrator, assessors and the TPP Professional Standards Committee. In addition, Mentors will have the chance to give feedback and share their experience with other Mentors.

### **Further information**

For further information and advice contact:

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