The Safety & Reliability Society
Hollinwood Business Centre, Albert Street,
Oldham, Manchester OL8 3QL
Tel: 0161 393 8411
Email: info@sars.org.uk

SAFETY and RELIABILITY SOCIETY (SaRS) ENGINEERING REGISTRATION COMMITTEE (ERC)

Guidance on the Professional Review (PR) Interview

Introduction

The Professional Review interview is the final stage of the application for Registration with the Engineering Council (EngC) as a Chartered Engineer C.Eng or Incorporated Engineer I.Eng. Prior to this the applicant will have submitted a joint SaRS/SEE application form, and the UK-SPEC based Statement of Competences questionnaire (SEE form MD79a for C.Eng, MD79b for I.Eng) or equivalent. These will have been reviewed first by the SaRS ERC, then submitted to the SEE and reviewed by the SEE Engineering and Membership (E&M) Committee. Where the SEE E&M committee have satisfied themselves that, on paper, and following the review in SaRS, the applicant is suitable to progress towards Registration based on their Engineering knowledge and evidence to demonstrate meeting the UK-SPEC competence and commitment requirements as applied to technical safety, reliability or risk management, a PR Interview will be recommended. In some cases a Technical Report will have been produced and reviewed prior to this.

The PR Interview should therefore be a confirmation not an initial examination.

Purpose

The purpose of the interview is to confirm, in a face to face way, that the applicant 'lives up to' the information submitted in the application form and statement of competences. Note that as part of this process SEE now require proof of identity at the interview. The interview is intended to be friendly and informal although it may not always seem like it to the applicant.

Interview Arrangements

Interviews have normally been held at the SEE offices in Buntingford, Hertfordshire and take around 1 hour. Interviews are also now held in

Aberdeen and can also be held, particularly for overseas applicants, via a video conference or Skype. There will normally be one interviewer from SEE, and one from SaRS, though this can vary, plus on occasions an observer from EngC. It is intended wherever possible that, where a SaRS member is not on the interview panel, that a SaRS representative will be present to support the applicant and to assist the interviewers with aspects of Safety and Reliability that SEE may be unfamiliar with.

Conduct of Interview

The Chair of the interview panel will use a check list of the competence and commitment criteria A1 to E5 from UK-SPEC Third Edition and the Panel will individually 'score' the applicant against each criterion.

The interviewee will be invited to describe their current role, and their involvement in a specific project (or projects) which demonstrate their achievement of the criteria in UK-SPEC sections A and B, and possibly C. This means that the applicant will in effect be making a presentation i.e. doing most of the talking rather than answering questions as is the normal interview situation. A limited amount of material such as relevant reports, etc can be used to help but there will not be time for Powerpoint presentations, software demos, etc. Because of the nature of this section of the interview there could be a benefit in preparing a 'bullet point' list (but not a prepared script) of the essential points to get over and to identify which of the UK-SPEC criteria are addressed from each; and/or practising or rehearsing the main points with a colleague.

The Chairman will then ask more specific questions/ prompting to address those criteria not yet demonstrated, including those in Sections D and E. The process is aimed at ensuring a consistent and auditable approach. This should not present any traps since the MD79 questionnaire will have identified where the criteria have been met. Not all applicants will be expected to meet all of the criteria at the same level however there is a target 'score' and the applicant should be able to demonstrate competence and commitment in all five sections (A-E) and for C.Eng to show better than the industry norm in at least one of the competency criteria.

Points to Note

The additional questioning is aimed at bringing out evidence of meeting the UK-SPEC criteria in areas such as planning, innovation, development of work processes, engineering understanding, etc where it has not already been produced, for example there is a danger of resorting to too much technical detail (which we are good at) rather than recognising what is being sought. Also, in our field, remember that we need to understand the 'engineering' of the system(s) we are working on in order to define needs, carry out analyses, and propose solutions, modifications or mitigation measures. We can sometimes take the engineering understanding for granted since we don't always deal with this bit however UK-SPEC is looking for demonstration of this understanding.

It must be remembered that the criteria include, in Section E, the commitment elements of adherence to Regulations, Codes of Practice and Codes of Conduct, (the SaRS Code of Conduct is on the website and in the Journal, the EngC guidance is in UK-SPEC and on the EngC website); safe systems of work; sustainability, professional development and Ethics. The applicant should have a Development Plan and a commitment to undertaking Continuing Professional Development (CPD). SaRS provides members with access to the MyCareerPath recording system which can help with this.

The applicant can (and should) take a limited amount of supporting evidence to the interview. This can overcome confidentiality problems of submitting material with the application form or questionnaire however there is unlikely to be the time or the opportunity to go into the detail of this, and in any case too much technical detail can distract from the purpose of the interview. Material used in this way does not need to be handed over.

The applicant should remember that what they are doing is demonstrating their personal role and contribution to the work, studies, projects, etc at the level of knowledge, experience and responsibility required by UK-SPEC. Try to avoid using 'we', as in a team activity, unless the personal contribution is then described, also avoid vague terms such as assisted, facilitated, etc which also do not make clear the personal contribution.

Note that the Third Edition of UK-SPEC, which came into force fully in 2016, contains an additional criterion E5 related to ethical principles. Applicants should at least familiarise themselves with the EngC/RAEng principles, listed in UK-SPEC. More details on the principles and on the associated guide 'Engineering Ethics in Practice' can be obtained from the RAEng website. You might be asked at interview for an example of applying these principles.

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