REGISTERED FUNCTIONAL SAFETY ENGINEER (RFSE)

If you are an experienced engineer working within the Functional Safety discipline, the InstMC RFSE qualification could be the right choice for you

This professional level qualification is aimed at those individuals that can demonstrate competence & commitment with a professional level of engagement within the relevant field. They cannot be gained through attendance on a short course. Registration as CEng with the Engineering Council UK is a pre-requisite in demonstration of professional standing. It is also a requirement that you are, or become, a member of the Institute of Measurement and Control.

To find out if you qualify and for further information on applying, please or visit:
www.instmc.org/careers_learning/professional_registration/rfse_rexe_qualifications.aspx

Scan QR Code for direct access to the RFSE web page

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Competence is critical in all professions, including Functional Safety, and consists of learned knowledge, acquired skills and practices.

Competence Management Systems (CMS) are there to define company standards and ensure that individuals meet them. Over the past decade I have experienced the full spectrum of CMS, from infancy to excellence. I used to believe that all that was needed to implement what I had learnt previously was good knowledge of the requirements and people's openness to change. That was wrong. To paraphrase Hari Seldon in Issac Asimov's Foundation, "the trend of a company full of people contains a huge inertia. To be changed it must be met with something possessing a similar inertia. Either as many people must be concerned, or if the number of people be relatively small, enormous time for change must be allowed."

The discussion around functional safety competence is a complex one. The various levels, succession planning, its management and continuous development are just few of the challenges that the industry faces. Moreover, the impending effect of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence, make it even more critical that duty holders stay up to date. For some organisations, the journey began decades ago, whilst others are just starting. That, however, is of no consequence to the level of diligence required for full compliance. How do we make it so that all duty holders implement and maintain their own management systems and achieve the same degree of competence internally? Difficult to say, and it certainly will not happen overnight.

The answer, for many, is resorting to third party expertise. But, as much as it is needed, it is not the complete answer. Others, and I am sure this comes as no surprise, believe that sending their engineers on a course, culminating in successfully passing an exam, suffices. But as often as not the training merely scratches the surface of what functional safety is. Training is but one of the elements that demonstrate competence. It must be corroborated with experience, appropriate attitude and behaviour, and underpinning knowledge of the application domain. The problem now is the need for a competent competence assessor, and it almost becomes a Catch 22. In an age of lean organisations forever getting leaner this can be a tough one to crack.

The InstMC Registered Functional Safety Engineer (RFSE) qualification is aimed at filling these gaps. As a peer review type assessment, tailored towards those with technical authority level responsibilities, it not only focuses on the evaluation of the individual's technical knowledge of functional safety as applied to their industry sector, but also takes a deep dive into their experience and attitude towards competence development and professional excellence.

The Functional Safety SIG recently held a webinar centred around the qualification, to explain in more detail to our wider audiences, the benefits of pursuing the title. The format was a Q&A covering the background and frequently asked questions, where a few of our most experienced RFSEs shared their knowledge. The video can be viewed on the InstMC You Tube channel at https://youtu.be/C4Etbuvztf0?si=_lttvcX6XRvkosCy

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