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IMC-Nigeria: CMC Application Manual

Guidelines to Potential Candidates

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO CMC APPLICATION

Purpose of this Manual

This manual means to provide guide and inside assistance for understanding the IMC Nigeria CMC certification process and requirements.

The Certified Management Consultant qualification (CMC) - *in a nutshell*

The CMC is a competency-based qualification - based on Evidence of your work as a management consultant - which is measured against the IMC-Nigeria competence framework and supporting requirements.

What is the CMC Designation?

The CMC is an internationally agreed and recognized competence-based designation, which is based on the competency framework. The responsibility rests with you, the candidate, to produce sufficient, relevant and timely Evidence of competence as a management consultant.

How do I Apply for CMC Certification?

You need to be a member of IMC Nigeria before applying for CMC certification. When you are inducted and become member of the IMC Nigeria, an application package will be sent to your email address. You can as well request for an application by yourself. It starts with an induction which make you a full member first, then you are guided through the rest.

What if I still require clarification, perhaps on issues which relate just to my personal experience of consulting?

Contact the IMC-Nigeria's Director-General if you would like more details.

What does an application consist of?

A CMC application is in two parts, namely:

- The Portfolio of Evidence and
- The Interview and assessment.

The Portfolio of Evidence

This consists documents you will submit as part of demonstration of required competences:

- An Assignment Study and
- A Professional Record (Which is effectively a record of work and all relevant qualifications).

The interview and Assessment

This consists of face to face (or virtual) enquiries into some competences, and will include a Presentation on the same subject as the Assignment Study or some professional client business situations, and you will be asked Questions to assess various competences and about other Evidences submitted.

Is the Assignment Study something like a dissertation?

The assignment study is not as rigorous as a dissertation. Your assessor will be looking for a clear and succinct narrative describing an interesting and challenging assignment that you have played a major role in and where you can demonstrate your understanding of a wide range of competences (*See the IMC Nigeria competence framework.*) It should be written in the first person, describing exactly what part *you* took in this project. The assessor will be interested in some particular aspects of this study and will ask pertinent questions regarding your study.

For example,

1. the problems presented and solutions found, and
2. Where these solutions were drawn from e.g. experience of an earlier assignment, from a relevant course or some recent reading about consultancy issues.

Produce the Assignment Study

The assignment study should be based on an assignment which you have carried out successfully within the *last three years*. The project should be typical of your work during that period and should, wherever possible, draw out your full range of strengths as a management consultant.

The assignment study should:

- Be written in the first person.
- Make it absolutely clear which aspects of the work were carried out by you and which by other consultants and support staff.
- Summarise the brief given by the client.
- Describe the assignment in detail, linking together the internal aspects of the work with the following external elements: political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental (PESTLE).
- Include a reflective commentary, describing the outcome of the assignment, and drawing out major successes or difficulties encountered.
- Critically analyse the assignment.
- Describe what was learned from undertaking this assignment, with reflection on how it was learned or how something might have been done differently.
- Be clear and succinct, yet of sufficient length to allow for detailed analysis. Diagrams or charts may be included if they add clarity.
- Be cross-referenced against the CMC sub-sets of Competence (in the competence framework) and other requirements e.g. PESTLE, if applicable. Candidates may wish also to cross-refer to reference sources, showing how reading or research has been used in reaching conclusions.

The assignment study offers a clear opportunity to cross-reference against the standards.

Cross-referencing

To make life easier for the assessor, it is important to cross-reference the Assignment Study and portfolio of evidence to the **Competence framework**. The approach to use is up to you. Be creative and think of your assessor as a valued client. It is the IMC-NIGERIA's intention to treat you as a competent consultant. We only ask that you prove it to us. But the *EVIDENCE-TO-COMPETENCE CROSS-REFERENCING FORM* is provided with the application package. It contains instructions on how to use it.

SECTION 2: DOCUMENTS AND COMPETENCE EVIDENCE CONCERNS

What's the difference between the Professional Record and a portfolio of evidence?

If you are starting from scratch, there may be little difference. You are gathering Evidence of your competence as a consultant in the form of:

- Copies of proposals, reports, analyses etc., plus
- Evidence of education and training, and matching them to the competence framework

The real difference emerges later. A portfolio is something that you assemble once for assessment in the format required by the IMC-Nigeria. The IMC-Nigeria recommends that you

keep an ongoing Professional Record as a basis for continuous professional development (CPD) as a consultant over the coming years. Distinguish between assignments and CPD per se.

What if I am unable to provide Evidence against some of the Statements of Competence?

The Statements of Competence have been designed to cover the complete spectrum of management consultants, in all their rich variety. If any of the Statements are not congruent with your experience or speciality, explain to the assessor why this is so and why there are gaps in the competencies. The IMC-Nigeria assessors are aware that each consultant is different and has different strengths and emphases. It is when Statements of Competence are simply ignored that problems with the assessment arise.

What does it mean that Evidence must be relevant, timely and sufficient?

The IMC-Nigeria is trying not to be too prescriptive; to allow for individuality, relevance and flair, thus minimising restrictive rules. In this way, the IMC-Nigeria aims to treat the assessment in a similar manner to your relationship with a client in practice.

Relevant means just that: if the Evidence is not relevant it will not be assessed (not even if it is worth a PhD in its own right). Evidence provided must be relevant to the assessment process and specific to the profession of management consulting.

Sufficient: your assessor, an experienced consultant will spend about an hour on your Portfolio of Evidence. Use your own experience to judge how much Evidence to submit and how best to present it for clarity. Evidence provided must be as succinct as possible, without major omissions in what is being requested from you.

Timely: the golden rule is that the more recent, the better. Certain evidence, such as a ***first degree***, may be 20 years old. That is still timely, in the sense that it was the first step in the process of acquiring knowledge. The older your ***assignment*** experience, the less timely it becomes, so use your most recent experience as evidence where possible, applying the sufficiency rule at the same time.

What if there is something missing in my application?

If your assessor decides that there is insufficient Evidence, you will be asked quite specifically to provide it and will be given sufficient time to respond, depending on the circumstances and nature of the additional Evidence required. If the Evidence is not submitted by the deadline or is insufficient, then the application lapses and the process needs to begin again. It is therefore in your interest to process your application as speedily as possible.

How is the Interview and assessment structured?

1. The Assessment Interview takes an hour and thirty minutes. The same assessor will lead the interview, perhaps assisted by one or two trained CMC volunteers as appropriate. During the first 10 minutes, you will be asked to give a presentation highlighting the key points of your Assignment Study.
2. The following 20 minutes will be spent on questioning you about the presentation and assignment study.
3. The remaining one hour will be spent on questions about the Evidence in your Professional Record and your competence level regarding the IMC-Nigeria competence framework and the Code of Conduct and Ethical Guidelines. *We remind you that you have signed acknowledgement and acceptance of the Code of Conduct when you applied as a member of the IMC-Nigeria.*

What if I fail?

There is no pass or fail. You will either have *satisfied* your assessor that you have demonstrated sufficient Evidence of your competence or *not yet satisfied* your assessor. If it is the latter, you may apply again in 6 months, with the benefit of hindsight. A new assessor may be allocated for the subsequent assessment.

SECTION 3: CMC CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Overview of the Process

- Become a full member of IMC Nigeria (Via physical induction workshop or the Distance Learning Option)
- CMC Application, and submission of documents
- CMC Competence Assessment for satisfactory Demonstration of CMC competences
- Review of your documents and assessment performance
- A decision of your assessment and status is taken and communicated to you
- Award of CMC Certificate (qualification), if your demonstrated competence is satisfactory.

Stages and Steps

1. Become a full member of IMC Nigeria

To become a CMC, you need to be a full IMC-Nigeria Member and then demonstrate your skills against the IMC-Nigeria of Competence framework. If you are not a Member, an application form can be found on the website <http://imcnig.org> You will gain full membership either through IMC Nigeria workshop Induction or via Distance Learning method.

As a member of the International Council of Management Consulting Institutes (ICMCI- see www.ICMCI.org), the IMC-Nigeria has links with many similar bodies around the world, which provide members with an international network of professionals with similar standards and goals. Only members of the ICMCI can award the CMC qualification. The CMC is a registered

mark. The CMC assessment process has been developed over many years and the IMC-Nigeria seeks to partner with academic institutions in further developing its intellectual capital.

2. Submission of Application and Portfolio of Evidence

You will get an application package via your email address, and you are expected to prepare your application requirements, fill the application form and other required forms, and submit to IMC Nigeria's official email with the subject title: ***“CMC Application and Portfolio of Evidence.”***

3. Be assessed for CMC Competence and Qualification

The CMC assessment process requires the applicant to produce Evidence of competence, experience, education and training. It is therefore necessary to have quality experience as a management consultant before applying to become a CMC. IMC Nigeria will begin your assessment at her membership induction seminar and continue with a call or virtual interview (the same if you were inducted via the virtual option)

4. Review of Evidences and assessment

Your application, and all evidences, will be reviewed for satisfaction of CMC competences, if satisfactory, you will be confirmed. If it is not yet acceptable or satisfactory, you will have three months in which to provide further evidence as would be requested by the assessor.

5. Decision

The candidate will be given written feedback regarding the outcome of his or her assessment and evidences provided. And if he or she has complied with all the requirements, including the fees, he or she will get a CMC qualification decision from the institute directly to the candidate's email address.

Content of the Application Package

This package for your application will include:

- CMC Application form
- IMC Nig. CMC Certification manual (This document)
- IMC Nig. CMC Competence framework
- Client reference form
- IMC Nigeria Code of Ethical conduct
- Evidence-to-competence Cross-referencing form
- Example of questions to be asked Client Referees
- Assignment profile
- And any other material or information for your easy and successful application & assessment.

SECTION 4: ASSESSING YOUR READINESS TO APPLY

Carefully study the requirements and the IMC Nigeria competence framework given in this pack. If you require further help, telephone IMC-Nigeria

Required Evidences a candidate should have

Evidence of Competence

Evidence of competence is provided by:

- Producing a detailed assignment study.
- Participating in the IMC Nigeria Induction (Via workshop or virtual)
- Completing a professional record including a CV, academic record, and relevant client references.
- Cross-referencing the assignment study, Qualifications, reference sources (if any), and professional record against the CMC competence framework using the ***Evidence-to-competence to cross-referencing form*** or as you prefer.
- Making a presentation on the subject of the assignment study.
- Providing corroboration of the Evidence provided in the assignment study and professional record at an assessment interview.
- Giving details of two independent referees who can vouch for your competence as a management consultant.
- Completing *the* CMC application form.

Evidence of Professionalism and Ethics

You must provide Evidence that you comply with the IMC-Nigeria Code of Professional Conduct and Ethical Guidelines. These are contained in the code of conduct document. How you provide this evidence is your personal choice. Printing and signing the code of conduct could work.

Evidence of Learning

To achieve the CMC standard, there must be Evidence of specific learning. Any credits awarded by an accrediting university will recognise learning rather than experience. In most instances, this will be a necessary part of preparing to demonstrate competence against all, or nearly all, of the standards, but it is important to include in the professional record an account of what learning has been undertaken and how it was done.

Exceptionally, it may be possible to claim competence against all of the standards without specific formal learning for the purpose. Such confidence will have been achieved as a result of earlier learning in one form or another, so you should include a resume of formal and

informal training, study and practical learning situations. (Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) principles will be applied in this situation)

Time to Prepare the Application

This may depend on the records which you keep about training, development, CPD and consultancy assignments, but an estimate of the average time for a consultant with complete records is 20-30 hours.

Fees

If you have not already applied as a Member of the IMC-Nigeria, please complete the Membership Application Form. This process needs to be completed before you apply to be assessed as a CMC.

Please attach your CMC application and assessment fees as detailed in the annual fee sheet, (payable to the IMC-Nigeria) to your completed application. Payments may be made by bank transfer. *(Proof of payment required with your application).*

SECTION 5: REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETING CMC APPLICATION FORM

1. Application form	
2. Assignment Study 3. An up-to-date CV. 4. Summaries of consultancy assignment e.g. briefings, analyses and final reports. 5. Evidence of qualifications - academic and vocational. 6. Evidence of on-going training and continuing professional development (CPD). 7. Evidence of contractual arrangements with clients. 8. Reflections on what has been learned from an assignment. 9. A cross-reference of evidences	PORTFOLIO OF EVIDENCE
10. Two Independent Client Referees	

Table 1

- * The IMC-Nigeria will respect the confidentiality of all documentation. If necessary, you may remove the names of clients or confidential details from documentation, stating where this has been done and the reason for it.

- Evidence should be sufficient, relevant and timely. Think of the Assessor as an astute client who must be fully convinced by what is produced. The Assessor will spend a fixed amount of time on the paper Evidence from all candidates, so you should aim for clarity and brevity.
- Evidence will be assessed only if it is cross-referenced to the particular standards for each of the stated competency areas.
- You should retain all originals and keep a full duplicate of your Professional Record and Assignment Study.

Independent Client Referees

Contact details of two independent client referees will be collected via the *client reference form*. The IMC-Nigeria will contact all of these referees directly. *Examples of questions asked of these referees* is included in your CMC application package.

References forwarded by the CMC applicant may be used as additional evidence, but the nominated referee will be contacted directly by IMC Nigeria. You should notify your referees before submitting an application. Referees should ideally be end-users of your consultancy work.

SECTION 6: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Send two copies of the completed application, the portfolio of evidence to IMC Nigeria official email address.
- Confirmation of receipt of complete application will be emailed to your designated email address within a week.
- Assessment of Portfolio of Evidence takes place by the IMC-Nigeria.
- You will receive an assessor's report stating:
 - either that the Portfolio of Evidence submitted is acceptable
 - or that additional Evidence must be supplied within three months of the date of the letter (the assessor will state exactly which areas need to be addressed).
- Arrangements for your assessment interview will be made once the Assessor has accepted your Portfolio of Evidence.
- At the assessment interview you will be expected to be able to expand on and corroborate any of the Portfolio of Evidence supplied.
- After the interview you will:
 - either receive a letter confirming that you are now a CMC
 - or receive an assessor's report stating which areas require further Evidence if you need to make a new application. If a new application is required, it will be necessary to pay a further assessment fee, but Evidence may be re-submitted where appropriate.

- Within a few weeks of being accepted you will receive an individually signed CMC Certificate.

You will be invoiced for the difference in your annual subscription between the Member and CMC rate.

Note: If you have done the competence assessment during the IMC induction event, this order and series of event described above will slightly be modified.

SECTION 7: THE ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW

Assessment interviews are held for candidates for the CMC qualification and take one hour and thirty minutes (But one hour for candidate who did part of the assessment at the Induction workshop).

1. Introduction

The assessment interview panel consists of the assessor and an IMC-Nigeria qualified panelist. The criteria against which you are assessed are set out in *The IMC competency framework*.

The purpose of the assessment interview is to corroborate the Evidence which has already been assessed at face value. It is also an opportunity for the assessor to probe any aspect of the Portfolio of Evidence and for the candidate to elaborate on any aspect of the portfolio. And finally, it is to assess your competence against the competence framework. The resultant decision and assessor's report is the responsibility of the assessor.

2. Preparation for a Presentation

You should prepare a succinct presentation on the salient points of your assignment study, aiming to spend a maximum of 10 minutes on it.

3. Making a presentation on the subject of the Assignment Study (10 Minutes)

You will be asked to give a 10-minute presentation to the assessor. View this presentation as if you were making a presentation to a client. The assessor may stop you if the allocated 10 minutes are exceeded.

This is an opportunity to emphasise the most important aspects of your assignment study, drawing particular attention to what was learned from this assignment.

4. Questioning on the Assignment Study (20 Minutes)

During the following 20 minutes of the assessment interview, the assessor will question you about the assignment study and related presentation. The aim of the questioning is to

corroborate the Evidence you have presented in both written and oral forms, and to ensure that the assignment has afforded you scope for learning at post graduate degree level.

5. Questioning about the Portfolio of Evidence and CMC Competences (60 Minutes)

During the remaining 30 minutes of the assessment interview the assessor will question you on the Evidence presented in your Portfolio of Evidence. The aim of the questioning is to corroborate the Evidence which has been presented, and to determine the stage of professional self-development you have attained.

The assessor and panellist(s) may probe any aspect of your Portfolio of Evidence. It is essential that you are fully conversant with all of the paper Evidence which has been presented.

However, the questions will not be directed at unnecessary detail or designed to catch you out in an unreasonable fashion. Whilst the interview is intended to provide a rigorous corroboration of the Portfolio of Evidence which has been presented, it will be held in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

6. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

You will be asked about the CPD records given as Evidence, and may be asked about CPD plans for the coming year.

7. Professionalism, Quality and Ethics

The assessor will ask you to formally confirm that you are willing to abide by the IMC-Nigeria Code of Professional Conduct and the IMC-Nigeria Ethical Guidelines.

SECTION 8: APPEAL

After the decision is conveyed to you and you wish to appeal against a decision, you should write to the Professional Registrar outlining your reasons for the appeal.

The IMC-Nigeria Moderator and Director-General IMC-Nigeria will take responsibility for the appeal and may:

- Uphold the decision of the assessor *or*
- Request further written Evidence *or*
- Request a second written assessment/ assessment interview/ complete assessment (by a second Assessor).

Details of all moderator/professional registrar interventions are submitted to the IMC-Nigeria professional board. Appeal decisions are final.

SECTION 9: NOTES REGARDING THE IMC-NIGERIA ASSESSORS

Role of the Assessor

- To review the Assignment Study, Professional Record and CV.
- To match the Evidence presented against the CMC standards within the CMC assessment groupings.
- To write an Assessor's Report on the basis of the Professional Record and Assignment Study which is sent to the candidate if the application is deemed to be *not yet acceptable*.
- To lead the assessment interview and to make the final decision.
- To write a further assessor report which will be sent to the candidate if the application is deemed *not yet acceptable* at this stage.

The Assessor must be satisfied that:

- The candidate have demonstrated CMC competences as defined in the IMC Nigeria competence framework.
- that a relevant qualification at *graduate or postgraduate* level, or an equivalent portfolio of prior learning and experience has been submitted to match the professional quadrant requirements and
- sufficient awareness of socio/ technological/ economic/ political awareness has been demonstrated (i.e. awareness within these headings which is directly relevant to the specialism, type of client and geographical location of the candidate)

The Assessor works within the following structure:

STRUCTURE DIAGRAM
Review Committee Is chaired by the Lead Assessor
Moderator Monitors and reviews the work of the assessors.
Assessors Carry out the paper assessment and Assessment Interview for the same candidate.
Lead Assessor The Lead Assessor makes an initial check of the paper Evidence, to ensure that the application is complete and fully cross-referenced against the statements of competence.

Candidate

The candidate has a right of appeal.

This should be made to the Lead Assessor who will confer with the Moderator.

The candidate has responsibility to submit appropriate Evidence for appeal.

Who is the Assessor?

Assessors are CMC qualified consultants who have volunteered to assist in the assessment process. They take part in the questioning of the candidate and offer guidance and advice to the assessor.

In addition, an assessor either:

1. has successful experience of the assessment of candidates at the IMC-Nigeria or at another comparable institute which is using a competence-based assessment system, *or*
2. is a qualified assessor, *or*
3. has significant experience of the internal assessment of their colleagues as part of their management, HR or consulting function at an appropriate level.

All Assessors are interviewed prior to appointment and undergo a CMC assessor induction course before undertaking their first assessment.

Who is the Moderator?

The moderator is an IMC-Nigeria qualified consultant who is highly experienced in competence-based assessment. The moderator works with the professional registrar to ensure uniformity of standards, monitors the work of assessors and panellists, and deals with appeals and complaints.

What is the Review Committee?

The review committee draws on a range of experience from consultants, assessors and trainers. It has overall responsibility for all matters connected with the CMC qualification and is the highest point of appeal. The chair and the Secretary of the committee are normally designated by IMC-Nigeria

SECTION 10: THE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Applicants for the CMC qualification must satisfy IMC-Nigeria of their competence, knowledge, awareness and understanding within each grouping of competencies as referenced in *IMC Nigeria CMC Competence Framework* (see the *Competence Framework* document)

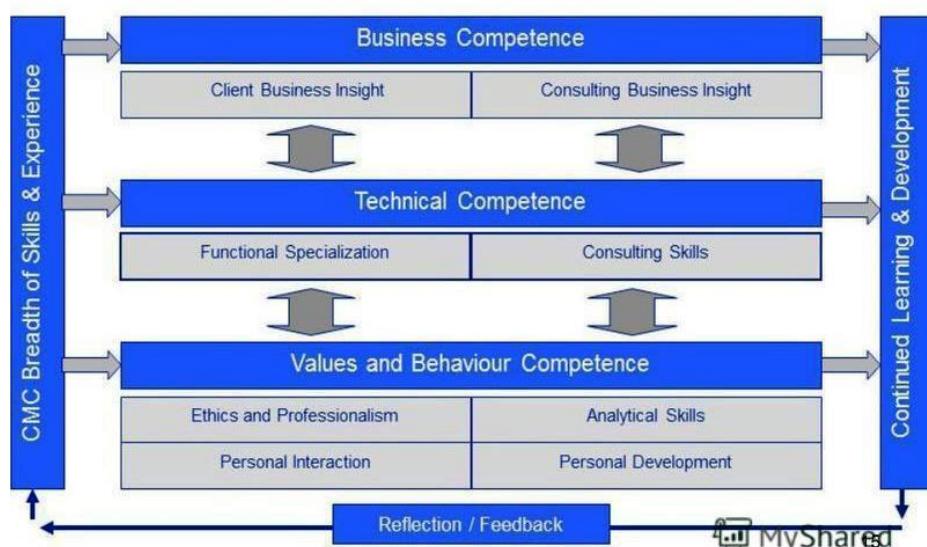


Figure 1: Displays a high-level overview of competence areas

Candidates will be assessed for all the competency groups or sub-sets of competences outlined in the framework, A1 through G5 (see *IMC Nigeria competence framework*). The whole CMC assessment has been designed to cover all competences. Candidate's competence in each sub-set will be measured for any of these three levels of strength:

Entry Level: Candidates demonstrate basic, supervised consulting skills, applying standard tools, ethical conduct, and client awareness to meet minimum expectations in discussions of client needs, processes, and sustainability.

CMC Level: Candidates independently articulate tailored, proactive solutions, integrating client insights, ethical behavior, and effective communication to deliver measurable values.

Profession Leader Level: Candidates strategically communicate transformative consulting approaches, showcasing leadership, stakeholder influence, and sustainable impact to drive long-term client and sector outcomes.

Candidates' relevant academic qualifications and records, CMC assessments, and provided evidences of consulting work, will be used to determine your level of competence in reference to IMC Nigeria framework of competences.

The assessors will consider a candidate overall demonstrated competence in all competency groups (or sub-set) to arrive at an aggregate performance. A CMC Candidate is expected to, overall, demonstrate CMC Level of competence to qualify as a CMC.

Please note:

- 1. That all documents, to facilitate your CMC application or recertification, referred to or referenced in this CMC Certification manual are included in the CMC application package sent to you.**
- 2. That all CMC application documents are to be sent to the IMC-Nigeria electronically in one email.**