

techUK Professionalism Steering Committee

Briefing Note: May 2017

techUK and IET: respective roles

The IET is holding internal discussions with a view to allocating sufficient internal funding to provide a resource for the next two years to drive a bespoke activity for individuals working within data centres. The activity would provide support for professional development, academic outreach, partnerships and governance. This initiative is very welcome to techUK and is the culmination of several years of cooperation between the two bodies. In response to a number of queries from techUK members, the respective roles of techUK and IET are clarified below.

techUK:

techUK is a national trade association, providing a collective voice for the UK digital technology sector. Membership is open to companies, not individuals. There is a bespoke data centre offering within the wider programme of activity. Objectives focus on delivering services for members in four main areas: developing markets, developing networks, reducing cost and reducing risk. The data centre programme activities tend to fall into three categories:

1. Changing things that negatively impact the sector (eg: resisting regulatory developments that are harmful or seeking policy intervention to level a playing field)
2. Mitigating the impact of things we cannot change (eg: reducing unnecessary compliance burdens)
3. Building awareness (eg: explaining the sector to policy makers and vice versa).

What we do: Within this context techUK engages actively in skills and professionalism issues relevant to business entities. For example we alert government to technical skills shortages and provide feedback on how effective current policies are. We support continued access to imported skills where necessary whilst promoting initiatives to improve domestic STEM education and a technical skills pipeline in the UK. We encourage professional registration and career development within the sector and promote the sector as a career destination of choice.

What we don't do: techUK does not seek to provide bespoke career development for individuals. While we support and promote the development of standards we do not develop standards. We do not assess academic courses or qualifications and we do not provide governance relating to individual professional standards or behaviour.

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)

The IET is a professional body representing engineers, with 167,000 members across 150 countries. Membership is open to individuals and not companies, although the IET does partner with

companies to aid staff development programmes. There is no bespoke data centre programme within IET although a joint project with techUK to encourage professional registration among data centre staff has been delivered successfully. The IET seeks to provide a home for life for engineers, to safeguard professional standards, to share knowledge, promote the benefits of engineering for the general good and provide impartial expert advice to government and other stakeholders.

What we do: The IET can award professional registration and a clear route to career development for individuals. The IET provides governance to maintain the integrity of professional standards. The IET also supports technical standards developments through its members and its technical authors. The IET can develop bespoke apprenticeship standards in cooperation with industry and can act as arbiter. The IET can provide outreach to academic institutions at all levels, and authoritative, impartial advice to external stakeholders.

What we don't do: IET does not seek to provide a collective voice for any individual business sector. The IET does not advocate, lobby, or otherwise represent the interests of any particular industry to government. It is not the representative body for a sector, although it can act as the representative body for individuals working within a sector, supporting and protecting their professional interests.

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