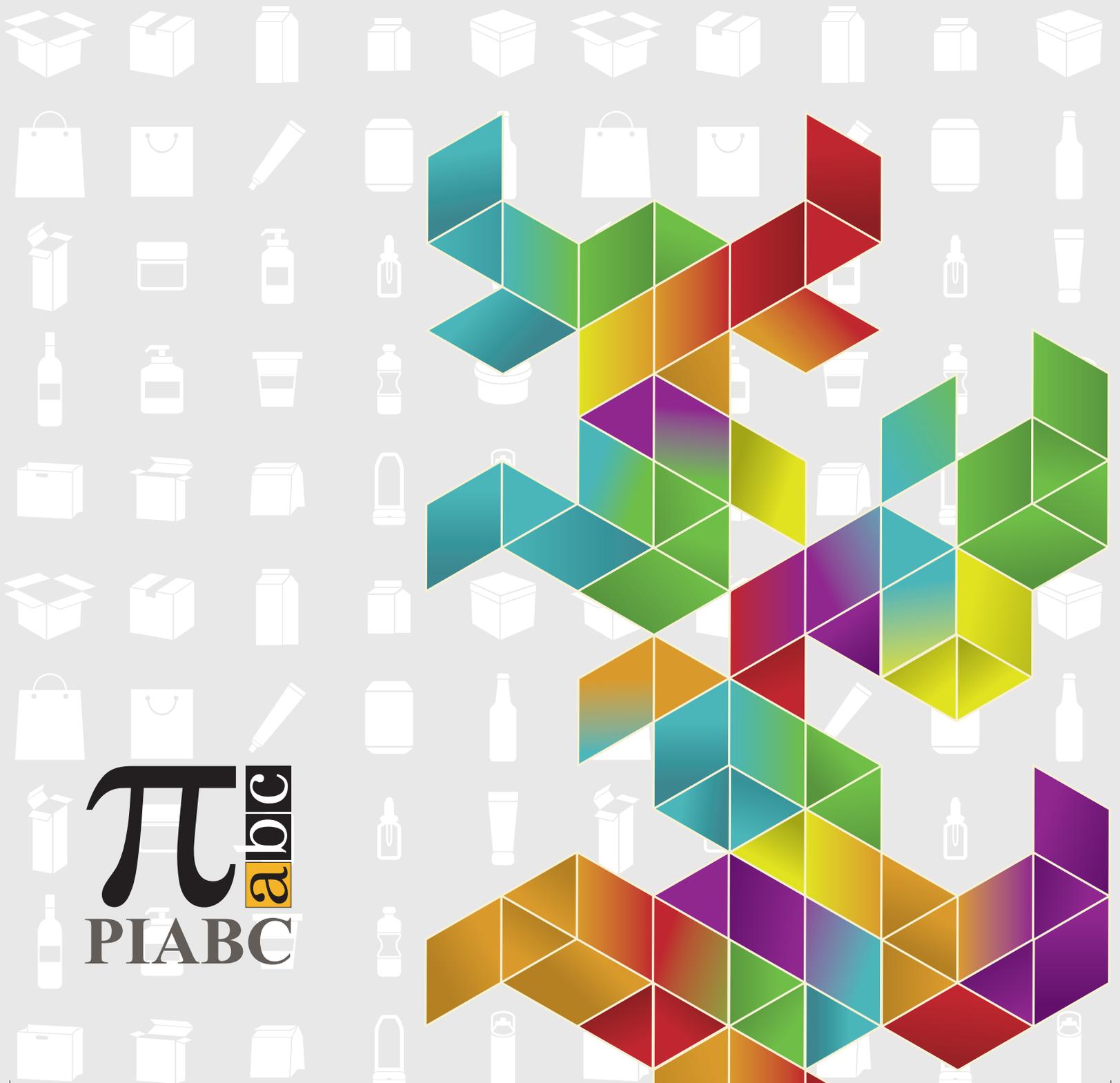


THE STANDARD FOR ACCREDITED PACKAGING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE



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FOREWORD

Packaging is a global industry which is vitally important in almost every part of our lives. It helps ensure that products arrive with consumers in a fresh and unspoilt condition and often prolongs the time that they can be kept. It provides convenience in the use of products that is essential if our lifestyle is to continue and develop. Packaging also carries key items of information that we all need so that products are used in the correct way and to maximum advantage, and it is a key element in the way in which companies promote their products. Finally, in times of emergency, packaging plays a vital role in delivery supplies such as drinking water to people who are at their most vulnerable.

The life cycle of a pack is often long and complex and many of its features are hidden from view as far as the consumer is concerned, but overall the presence of packaging that is well designed and produced contributes to a more sustainable supply chain. Packaging should be considered as an essential element in the total product life cycle (after all packaging does not exist on its own) and when it is, it clearly plays a key part in promoting sustainability.

Despite the importance of packaging, there is a lack of professional recognition for those in the industry when compared with other occupations. This means there is no clear route into packaging as a career and once there, individuals find it difficult to gain acknowledgement of their expertise or identify progression paths for their future development. Companies also face problems in identifying those with the required levels of skill and expertise needed to carry out some of the most important functions in their organisation.

This absence of professional recognition is now being addressed by this **Standard for Accredited Packaging Professional Competence (SAPPC)** which is being awarded by PIABC, a professional awarding body operating within the Institute of Materials Minerals and Mining, to meet needs across the packaging supply chain, to promote packaging as a profession and enhance the status of those working in this vital and complex sector.

Keith Barnes
Chair, Packaging Society Board,
The Institute of Materials,
Minerals and Mining

INTRODUCTION

This Standard was modelled on the Engineering Council's UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence. Although the Engineering Council's competences are relevant to some packaging occupations, for example in the machinery sector¹, their scope and focus is different, hence the requirement for a separate standard to recognise and designate packaging professionals.

In order to become an Accredited Packaging Professional, members of the industry must demonstrate that they meet the requirements of the Standard which are contained in this document and once they do, they will be entitled to use the designation **APkgPrf**.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

An Accredited Packaging Professional is someone who has the knowledge, experience and expertise to provide answers and solve packaging problems, producing fit-for-purpose solutions in their own specialist area within the industry. They may work in any part of the packaging supply chain focusing on technical issues, design, management, marketing and branding, or in the provision of specialist services. They may also work in any material or product sector. In doing this they will apply their existing knowledge and expertise, and also have the ability to seek out new information and employ creative and novel solutions to problems. Accredited Packaging Professionals will provide high levels of strategic, technical, conceptual and commercial leadership, and interpersonal skills.

Accredited Packaging Professionals come from a variety of backgrounds reflecting the nature and scope of the industry. However, it is essential that they have a high level of academic achievement, the ability to handle complex concepts and problems, to seek out solutions in new areas and to manage their own professional development.

¹ For those with that specialism, the Engineering Council's designation may be more appropriate. See www.engc.org.uk

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The purpose of the SAPPC is to provide a set of general competences against which those in all parts of the packaging industry can have their professionalism judged by their peers. Competence comprises the ability to bring together knowledge and understanding with values and expertise. It is developed and maintained through a combination of formal, and informal, education and training, combined with experience and reflection.

Accredited Packaging Professionals must be competent throughout their working lives, by virtue of their education, training and experience, to:

- 1. Use a combination of general and specialist packaging knowledge and practice to optimise the application of existing and emerging technology.**
- 2. Apply targeted knowledge, expertise and methods to the analysis and solution of packaging problems.**
- 3. Lead others in any part of the packaging supply chain.**
- 4. Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills.**
- 5. Demonstrate a personal commitment to professional standards, recognising obligations to society, the profession and the environment.**

Full details of each of these competences are provided on the following pages.

1. Use a combination of general and specialist packaging knowledge and practice to optimise the application of existing and emerging technology.

1.1. Maintain and extend a sound theoretical approach in enabling the introduction and exploitation of new and advancing packaging focused knowledge and practice, and other relevant developments.

Which could include an ability to:

- Understand the scope of your own professional knowledge and expertise
- Extend capacity in your own specialism and develop others in the packaging industry
- Broaden and deepen your own knowledge and competence through developing packaging practice, experimentation and research

1.2. Engage in the creative and innovative development of packaging knowledge, practice and continuous improvement systems.

Which could include an ability to:

- Develop strategies to discover and understand users' requirements
- Translate these needs into new or modified professional packaging practice within your own specialism
- Implement and monitor programmes to meet the requirements of packaging users overcoming problems and difficulties
- Identify opportunities to transfer knowledge and practice
- Secure necessary intellectual property rights
- Develop and evaluate quality improvement systems

2. Apply targeted knowledge, expertise and methods to the analysis and solution of packaging problems.

2.1. Identify suitable packaging developments and opportunities.

Which could include an ability to:

- Recognise new opportunities within your own specialism
- Enhance packaging products, processes, systems and services
- Consider the practical viability of new opportunities

2.2. Research, design and develop appropriate solutions to packaging problems.

Which could include an ability to:

- Identify and agree a sound approach to packaging development
- Secure the necessary resources to meet development requirements
- Carry out the necessary consultations and tests, where appropriate
- Collect, analyse and evaluate the results
- Draft, present and agree recommendations, taking account of cost, quality, safety, reliability, appearance, fitness for purpose and environmental impact

2.3. Implement solutions to packaging problems, and evaluate their effectiveness.

Which could include an ability to:

- Ensure that the solution meets requirements and is fit for purpose
- Take account of critical constraints when solving packaging problems
- Agree with others a programme for evaluating solutions to packaging problems
- Actively learn from the process, including from others involved, to build best practice

3. Lead others in any part of the packaging supply chain.

3.1. Plan for effective packaging development, implementation or production.

Which could include an ability to:

- Identify the factors affecting packaging development, implementation or production
- Lead on preparing and agreeing plans and methods
- Identify and secure appropriate resources including human resources
- Present results and plans to others
- Negotiate and influence contractual negotiations arrangements involving clients and others

3.2. Identify, organise and control appropriate people and resources to achieve pre-set packaging goals.

Which could include an ability to:

- Plan, specify and secure necessary resources
- Agree programme resources within legal and statutory requirements
- Organise and lead teams and packaging activities
- Identify variations from plans and specifications, and ensure that corrective action is taken, or adjustments made
- Evaluate programmes and recommend improvements

3.3. Provide leadership to achieve changing technical, conceptual and managerial needs in a packaging environment.

Which could include an ability to:

- Identify changing needs and requirements with others and agree how these might be met
- Establish team and individual needs, and help ensure they are met
- Ensure that teams and individuals are fully acquainted with current packaging knowledge and aware of likely trends and developments
- Provide leadership and support for individuals and teams
- Assess and provide feedback on performance to teams and individuals

3.4. Ensure continuous improvement to packaging processes through employing appropriate quality management tools and techniques.

Which could include an ability to:

- Develop quality in areas of responsibility and with stakeholders
- Ensure that processes and procedures meet quality standards
- Evaluate programmes and develop recommended improvements

4. Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills.

4.1. Communicate effectively with others at all levels.

Which could include an ability to:

- Contribute to, chair and record meetings and discussions
- Undertake the training of others
- Prepare letters, documents and reports on complex matters
- Exchange information and provide advice to specialists and non-specialists

4.2. Present and discuss proposals.

Which could include an ability to:

- Prepare and deliver presentations on proposals, specifications and strategic matters
- Lead and sustain debates with audiences
- Feed the results back to improve proposals

4.3. Demonstrate personal and social skills.

Which could include an ability to:

- Know and manage own emotions, strengths and weaknesses
- Be aware of the needs and concerns of others
- Be confident and flexible in dealing with new and changing interpersonal situations
- Identify, agree and lead work towards collective goals
- Create, maintain and enhance productive working relationships, and resolve conflicts

5. Demonstrate a personal commitment to professional standards, recognising obligations to society, the profession and the environment.

5.1. Comply with relevant codes of conduct.

Which could include an ability to:

- Comply with the codes of professional conduct of own professional body such as the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining
- Lead work within all relevant legislation and regulatory frameworks, including social and employment legislation

5.2. Manage and apply safe systems of work.

Which could include an ability to:

- Identify and take responsibility for own obligations for health, safety and welfare issues
- Ensure that systems satisfy health, safety and welfare requirements
- Develop and implement appropriate hazard identification and risk management systems
- Manage, evaluate and improve these systems

5.3. Undertake packaging activities in a way that contributes to sustainable development.

Which could include an ability to:

- Operate and act responsibly, taking account of the need to progress environmental, social and economic outcomes simultaneously
- Use imagination, creativity and innovation to provide products and services which maintain and enhance the quality of the environment and community, and meet financial objectives
- Understand and secure stakeholder involvement in sustainable development

5.4. Carry out continuing professional development necessary to maintain and enhance competence in own area of practice.

Which could include an ability to:

- Undertake reviews of own development needs
- Contribute to the activities of professional bodies
- Prepare action plans to meet personal and organisational objectives
- Carry out planned and unplanned CPD activities
- Maintain evidence of competence development
- Evaluate CPD outcomes against action plans
- Assist others with their own CPD

HOW TO GAIN ACCREDITED PACKAGING PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

To become an Accredited Packaging Professional will require the following:

1. At least five years' experience in packaging focused occupations;
2. A nationally recognised professional packaging qualification or evidence to show an equivalent level of conceptual and technical knowledge;
3. A commitment to a minimum of 35 hours of continuing professional development (CPD) per year if in full time employment (pro rata if employed part time). Such a commitment is subject to sample auditing;
4. Submission of a Professional Report showing career development;
5. Continuing membership of a professional body such as the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining

These elements will be used as the means through which applicants are assessed against the SAPPCC.

Successful candidates are able to use the designation **APkgProf.**

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Although UK based, PIABC freely offers this designation format to packaging associations in other countries using suitable locally available qualifications and membership associations.

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