

MCIQB – INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

NAME	Ian Traynor, MCIQB
TITLE	Hospital Technical Manager
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Background

CIOB members are drawn from a diversity of backgrounds and skills, but few more so than Ian Traynor. A land surveyor by training, a senior site engineer by experience and the holder of an Open University degree in international studies, Traynor's 37 years in the construction industry – 18 of them overseas – are richly varied.

The 55-year old became an MCIQB in 2008 when he switched from being a senior engineer at Balfour Beatty to specialise in design management at the same firm. He won his spurs in this new specialism as the technical manager on the £560m Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, where Balfour Beatty was the PFI contractor. "I wanted a formal qualification relating to design management, but there weren't really too many options at the time," recalls Ian. "A friend of mine suggested the CIOB, as the closest related institute."

Ian looks back with a strong sense of gratitude. "It's great that the CIOB provide a route for middle level managers like myself who have not come up the graduate route, to become members and give our careers a boost."

His membership has again proved invaluable to Ian in the latest phase of his career, which has seen him build on his success on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital project to take on similar roles in the Middle East, a region where the construction of health facilities is particularly buoyant.

He spent three years in Abu Dhabi before transferring to work in March 2013 as the technical manager for contractor Habtoor Leighton, on construction of the National Institute of Neuroscience, Cancer, and Cardiac & Proton Centres (PPNNCC) in Riyadh. The £200m, 510-bedroom medical facility includes a Proton Therapy Unit, the first in the Gulf region for the treatment of cancer.

"The CIOB accepted my work experience together with my degree in international studies for ICIOB. I went on to full membership after studying at workshops being held at the local branch in Birmingham to prepare myself for the interview. I'm not great at interviews but the experience I gained at the workshops meant I sailed through."

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So how has being an MCIQB helped in your career?

The hospital project I was working on in Abu Dhabi came to an end and I was approached to work for Leighton on the PPNNCC in Saudi. To get a visa in Saudi you have to have a degree and to be able to bring your family out requires senior engineer status, which requires an engineering degree. I applied on the basis that my MCIQB was comparable to British bachelor degree level. As I was able to show a letter from NARIC, the UK's national agency responsible for verifying qualifications worldwide, this was accepted. That's because at the CIOB's instigation NARIC have been assessing how the institute's qualifications compare against a national UK qualifications framework, the QCF. NARIC concluded that MCIQB is comparable to British bachelor degree level and FCIOB, post-graduate level.

What was the attraction of the Middle East?

The job in Abu Dhabi suited me and my family. I had worked in the Middle East before and enjoyed it. My wife is Ethiopian and wanted to move somewhere warmer than our Shropshire home. My wife and 12-year daughter are moving out in December. My other daughter is 19 and at university.

What does your role involve?

I am responsible for managing the interfaces between all the different teams on a project including the client design team, main contractor, mechanical and electrical contractor and medical equipment planning consultants. It's absolutely crucial in a hospital to purchase equipment as late as possible to ensure it's the most medically advanced. It is my role to ensure that the building will be constructed in such a way to allow the maximum flexibility in these final choices whilst minimising the amount and effect of alterations needed. The key is making sure the infrastructure is all there – the right number of electrical lines, medical gases, chilled water and that sort of thing. If these get built in at a later date it becomes expensive to change.

And when you're not working?

I'm a big sports fan. But the last few years a big activity has been playing chauffeur for my daughters. I'm actively involved in the CIOB.

What's your career highlight?

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham. I got a completely different kind of buzz than what you get when you've built an office or other commercial building.