



10-year review of the competencies expected of transport planning professionals

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Abbreviations

CIHT – Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation

PDS – Professional Development Scheme

PMG – Partnership Management Group

PSC – Professional Standards Committee

PTK – Portfolio of Technical Knowledge

TPP – Transport Planning Professional

TPS – Transport Planning Society

1 Introduction

The year 2018 is notable for the ongoing development of transport planning as a profession. It marks 10 years since the Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification was launched and is the year in which an approach has been made to the Privy Council for TPP to be conferred with Chartered status (CTPP). The TPP is awarded by the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT) and the Transport Planning Society (TPS). As stated on the TPP website¹:

The Transport Planning Professional (TPP) qualification enhances the standing of transport planning as a career and acknowledges transport planners as respected professionals, whilst encouraging the development of the skills needed to tackle the major challenges facing the transport sector.

The TPP qualification has been designed to provide professional recognition for transport planners in the same way that Chartered Engineer recognises the highest level of engineering competence.

Since 2008 the world has moved on – we have endured a global financial crisis, new trends in travel behaviour have emerged and innovation in transport technologies and services signal potentially significant changes for future mobility. There is a sense that we *may* be entering a new paradigm for the transport sector. At the very least, uncertainty has become the order of the day. During this period, the transport planning profession has faced testing times in relation to an austere economic climate. Meanwhile the TPP and the supporting mechanisms underpinning the route to the qualification's award have become more established, with growing interest and engagement from transport planners. Over 200 individuals now hold the TPP qualification and many more are on their journey towards it.

It was always to be expected that the competencies and approach for the TPP would at some stage benefit from a review that could take advantage of experience gained since the launch of the TPP and consider how the environment for transport planning itself may have changed.

This report constitutes the first stage of a comprehensive review of the TPP. It is based upon a series of five workshops with 34 TPP stakeholders in which the competencies expected of transport planners by the TPP have been critically examined. The report summarises the insights gained from the five workshops and makes recommendations regarding how the second stage of this 10-year review of the TPP might proceed and the types of revision to the TPP competencies, processes and paperwork that should be considered.

In embarking on this review, the TPP Partnership Management Group (PMG) and Professional Standards Committee (PSC) which provide the governance, operational oversight and award-making powers of the TPP have been very mindful of how this might be perceived by TPP stakeholders and in particular those individuals who are currently working towards their TPP qualification. Accordingly, **it is important to stress at the outset that the review does not expect to lead to fundamental changes to the structure and content of the TPP competency requirements. The PSC has already established that these are sound.**

The report begins with some further background and a summary of the approach that has been taken in the first stage of the review. The main body of the report summarises the views from across the workshops that have taken place. The report concludes with a set of summary recommendations.

¹ <http://www.tpprofessional.org/>

2 Background

In 2015, the CIHT launched a new initiative called 'CIHT FUTURES'² (supported by JMP Consultants Ltd³). Its purpose was principally to draw upon the views of transport professionals in critically examining the outlook for transport and to produce insights concerning the approach that is now needed when addressing transport planning, policymaking and investment in the face of uncertainty.

CIHT FUTURES involved a series of 11 workshops across the UK, engaging with just over 200 CIHT members. These examined transport professionals' views on uncertainty and the plausibility of very different outlooks for transport and society. It examined in turn their views on two policy-making approaches. One was called 'regime compliant', containing elements that would, together, reflect an approach to decision making that would be compliant with the current way of the world or 'regime' (in which adherence to trends and the nature of the world we have known pushes policy) culminating in predict and provide. The other was called 'regime testing' with an approach that brings into question the nature of the world as we have known it and leads to vision pulling policy decisions (culminating in 'decide and provide').

In summary, messages emerging from CIHT FUTURES were that:

- (i) there is broad consensus that the future is *deeply* uncertain;
- (ii) there is considerable dissatisfaction with our present approaches to transport planning and policymaking (typically seen as 'regime compliant');
- (iii) there is considerable appetite to move *towards* a different approach that can better address new dynamics in, and between, transport and society ('regime testing');
- (iv) emphasis on due process (accountability) has grown at the expense of outcomes-based stewardship of the future (responsibility); and
- (v) there is a sense of 'professional impotence' – individuals sensing risk of exposure in challenging orthodoxy and a collective inadequacy of skills and resources.

The CIHT FUTURES final report was published in August 2016⁴. It contained a series of recommendations. Pertinent to the TPP was the following:

"The CIHT and Transport Planning Society should consider a critical review of the skills areas for which competencies are examined for the Transport Planning Professional qualification. Such a review might question how skills areas are interpreted and in turn how competencies are developed in individuals and whether sufficient challenge to dogma and encouragement to contemplate regime testing thinking is apparent or expected. It would be appropriate to directly engage universities in any such review. Similar consideration would be appropriate for other professional qualifications."

This recommendation was brought to the attention of the PSC. An initial review of the TPP competencies was undertaken by PSC members. With the support and endorsement of the PMG, Professor Glenn Lyons was asked by the PSC to take forward a more substantive review exercise through facilitating a series of workshops with TPP stakeholders.

² Future Uncertainty in Transport – Understanding and Responding to an Evolving Society

³ JMP is now part of Systra.

⁴ <http://www.ciht.org.uk/en/knowledge/futures/futures-report.cfm>

3 Approach

A total of five two and a half-hour workshops were arranged with TPP stakeholders (PSC members, TPP holders, TPP reviewers, TPS PDS mentors, PTK assessors and TPP approved Masters course providers). Two workshops took place in Glasgow at the Transport Scotland offices on 24 January 2018 and two took place on 25 January in London at the CIHT offices in London. The final workshop took place on 21 February also at the CIHT offices. In total, 34 people participated in the workshops – a list of attendees can be found in Appendix 1 (including further TPP stakeholders who could not attend but who provided detailed feedback). Invitations had been circulated across the different stakeholder groups.

The set of slides used in each of the workshops can be found in Appendix 2. In each workshop the same structured format was followed:

- (i) a recap on CIHT FUTURES, its findings and recommendations and in turn sharing of views on the timeliness and need for a review of TPP;
- (ii) an examination of the notion of ‘constructive challenge’ (explained in Section 5) as an important aspect of transport planning practice;
- (iii) a review of the individual technical skill units of TPP;
- (iv) a review (more briefly) of the management skill units as a set; and
- (v) consideration of other issues relating to the TPP requirements and guidance.

Participants had been asked to reflect upon the set of TPP competencies in advance of attending the workshops and this was invaluable in ensuring a well-informed discussion took place at each of the workshops.

The next sections of the report summarise the insights gained from the workshops for each of the five elements listed above. Selective footnote quotes are included from participating TPP stakeholders for illustrative purposes.

4 Recapping on CIHT FUTURES and the need for a review of TPP

Timeliness of the review recognised – Ten years on from the TPP’s launch there is now some maturity with which to reflect upon transport planning competencies which was not afforded at the outset of the qualification. The context in which transport planning operates is also changing. Recent years have seen a heightened sense of uncertainty over the future, coupled with new dynamics in behaviour and an awareness of (the potential) for ongoing change, marked notably by technology-led innovation but also by wider changes within society⁵. A stakeholder involved in the initial establishment of the qualification suggested that the current period of churn in both professional understanding and institutional frameworks is unprecedented since the late 1960s / early 1970s. This was a time that saw the Transport Act 1968, Local Government Act 1972 and rapid developments in methodology that provided the structure on which transport planning was to build and from which it was to evolve progressively until 2010. The timeliness of the review was not in question across the five workshops⁶.

⁵ As a simple illustration, one stakeholder referred to a cycling strategy developed only a year ago that made no mention of dock-less cycle hire.

⁶ One stakeholder expressed the position as follow: “overall, society [now] expects better from transport planners and we must change to meet this greater expectation”.

Evolution not revolution – This review is an opportunity to make some significant revisions to the TPP without destabilising the position it has established in its first 10 years (and without causing concern for those who are part-way along their journeys towards the TPP qualification).

Transferable versus technical skills – There is an inevitable lag between the changing climate of, and context for, decision making and the underpinning transport planning tools and processes. We are facing change in the transport sector and we cannot afford that lag to be too great. Technical skills requirements will change which brings into question the balance between technical and transferable skills that transport planners should be equipped with. There are short term versus longer term skills requirements to be considered.

Reputational risk – If transport planning (and therefore the TPP certification) does not evolve and remain relevant and respected as a profession capable of addressing contemporary issues then it risks reputational damage⁷. The profession must be clear on what is expected of it as well as what it expects of itself.

A new breed of transport planner – Emerging generations of transport planners are perceived as having different expectations – they want to move up within their organisation or may move out of the profession and can be impatient or frustrated concerning a systematic need to accumulate competencies aligned to ‘business as usual’ in transport planning. Such expectations need to be managed but also supported, which suggests that communication surrounding TPP is important and needs more attention.

In summary, there was a welcome reaction across the stakeholder workshops to TPP being subject to a review with appreciation of the need for the qualification to ‘move with the times’ and ensure continuous improvement.

5 Constructive challenge in transport planning

Interpreting constructive challenge - Constructive challenge as a competency can be defined as “a capacity and willingness to question the appropriateness or robustness of orthodox approaches, consider how they might be improved or how alternative approaches might (also) be introduced”⁸ (see also the slides in Appendix 2). Constructive challenge is acknowledged as a powerful concept that should take its place among the required competences of transport planners – but that place should be a proportionate one. Many objectives of transport planning, especially shorter (and even medium)-term ones, have to be achieved within existing regimes, whatever they happen to be at the time and in the place concerned.

What we need versus what we have – There is a recognition that a status quo of ‘regime compliance’ is in some respects being maintained through resource constraints, procurement practices and the appeal of standardization and prescriptive guidance⁹. We are at risk of not evolving

⁷ Such risk was illustrated as follows by one stakeholder: “a young transport planner said – the problem is, I know the level of uncertainty in the work I’ve just done, but if I told the client the range of uncertainty, they wouldn’t pay”.

⁸ See page 10 of Lyons, G. (2018). Is Transport Planning Fit for Purpose? *Proc. of the 16th Annual Transport Practitioners Meeting*, 5-6 July, Oxford.

⁹ One stakeholder remarked, “here’s WebTAG, tick the boxes and your scheme might progress”

quickly enough in a changing environment¹⁰. Meanwhile it was suggested that a sense of whether regime compliance or regime testing was at play (and the appropriateness of one over the other) rather depended upon the role an individual has and the part of the transport planning process in which they are involved. It is acknowledged that behaviour of transport planners is something that could adapt more readily than the framework within which they operate.

Uncertainty needs to be embraced but isn't – TPP holders show clear awareness of uncertainty and its implications but it is suggested that this is not reflected well enough across the TPP competencies as described. Experience in practice can, meanwhile, be frustrating with resistance to, or ignorance of, the (degree of) uncertainty faced¹¹. There are strong norms in the expectations of transport analysis that are compounded by limited budgets and expectations of complying with the brief from the client. Counter to this it was suggested that in some instances the client does understand the issue of uncertainty but struggles to understand how best it can be handled. This also highlights the importance of effective communication for transport planners.

Constructive challenge is (perceived as) lacking in the TPP – The capacity to 'challenge dogma' is to be encouraged. However, as it currently stands, the competency expectations regarding constructive challenge are not adequate and clearly articulated. It is argued that constructive challenge indeed might be especially important in the effective development of younger generations of professionals to succeed the older generations. It is suggested that the current wording of expectations within the technical skill units does have latitude for addressing constructive challenge. However, this is not the same as clearly signalling an encouragement of, and expectation concerning, constructive challenge (including how it is addressed when candidates sit their TPP Professional Review). The matter of perception is key; if perceptions differ between the different stakeholders of the TPP then ambiguity arises which is not ultimately helpful to candidates.

Desirable versus necessary constructive challenge competency – It is considered important to recognise the need to be conversant with orthodox thinking and practice before one can reasonably challenge it. It can take a long time to 'learn the basics' (and this alone may be discouraging for early career transport planners who may then not be encouraged to remain in the sector). This should not preclude *beginning* to develop an appreciation and application of constructive challenge. The capability and confidence of an individual to constructively challenge develops over time. It is suggested that by the time of the TPP Professional Review (standard route) candidates should be expected to be capable of constructive challenge even if they do not have (substantial) experience with which to demonstrate it¹². This suggests a competency that reaches beyond the level of awareness but does not extend as far as proficiency.

¹⁰ As one stakeholder put it, "when a client asks you to build a wall, you ask how high rather than asking why they want to build a wall and what other options there might be".

¹¹ As one stakeholder put it, "when you raise uncertainty with the client they find it hard to grasp the concept; if you give them a BCR range they then say 'no, we want a number'". Another stakeholder remarked that in response to their report to a client, they were told "you are going to have to take the error bars off the results because my boss won't understand that". An example of design work for a petrol filling station was given in which contrary to deep uncertainty surrounding the future of such filling stations in the face of electrification of vehicles and fleets, all the client was concerned about was how much traffic would be generated and with what implications for junction design.

¹² Effective constructive challenge could be seen as part of what, as one stakeholder put it, "changes a transport planner from good to great". At the stage of the TPP review 'good' is expected while 'great' is desirable. Transport planning should be about, as one stakeholder put it, "giving the best advice you can, even if the client does not want to hear it".

Breadth versus depth - It was suggested that the TPP may be getting bypassed by some (potentially) highly capable transport planners who are good at constructive challenge in their areas of specialism (having achieved depth) but who are disinclined, or unable through their current job function, to demonstrate technical competency across the breadth represented by the TPP technical skill units. There was some suggestion that this issue may have been more pertinent to those who were establishing their career before the TPP was launched. Nevertheless, this points to an important consideration raised by workshop participants, namely: what depth *across the* breadth should be expected by the TPP? Striking any new balance would require great care and attention yet this matter may prove to be something at the heart of the review.

6 Review of the individual technical skill units of TPP

The workshops did not allow for a detailed assessment of all aspects of the technical skill units of the TPP. Nevertheless, thanks to the well-prepared state that participants arrived in for the workshops, considerable insight was made possible in a way that it is hoped provides a strong basis for any more systematic review (and revision) of written documents and guidance relating to the TPP competencies.

In each workshop, a traffic light assessment was applied to each of the technical skill units (the minimum competency level required is shown in brackets¹³):

Policies and regulations

A1 - Working within the policy context (experience)

A2 – Laws and regulations (experience)

Tools and techniques

A3 – Data (proficiency)

A4 – Transport models & forecasting (experience)

A5 – Appraisal and evaluation (experience)

Design

A6 – Stakeholder engagement (experience)

A7 - Developing strategic and master plans (awareness)

Operations

A8 - Applying the principles of transport systems design (awareness)

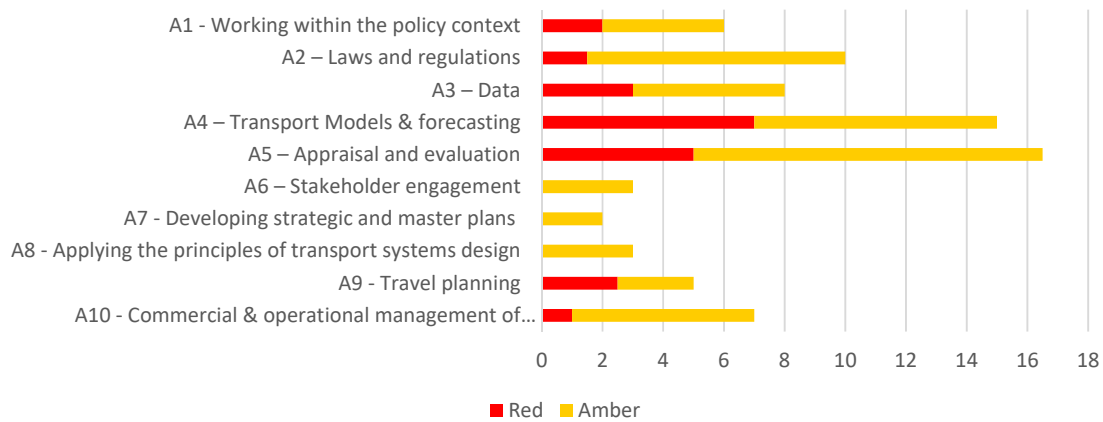
A9 - Travel planning (awareness)

A10 - Commercial & operational management of transport systems (awareness)

Workshop participants were asked to consider indicatively, in relation to fitness for purpose, whether they felt each unit was: (i) broadly OK (green); (ii) unclear or ambiguous in its fitness for purpose (amber); or (iii) (partially) deficient (red). In order to help prioritise available workshop time for discussion across the units, instances of red and amber were recorded. The overall picture across the workshops from this *simplistic* prioritisation exercise can be seen below.

¹³ To gain the TPP, meeting the minimum for each unit is not sufficient. Candidates are expected to choose at least four of the units where they can demonstrate proficiency.

Workshop participants' traffic light assessment of technical skill units



This offers an insight into the overall makeup of potential concern associated with the technical skill units as they are currently set out. It is notable that 'tools and techniques' is the most prominent subset of units (A3 to A5) that it is felt requires attention.

Provided below are summaries of points raised associated with each technical skill unit. These should be taken as indicative of the more specific and forensic review and potential revision that should be considered in the second part of this 10-year review (as set out in Section 9).

A1 Working within the policy context

- Existing wording in this unit refers to the *current* policy context – but current for who/where¹⁴/when (especially in relation to international practice)? It is suggested that the onus should be on TPP reviewers to be capable of appropriately testing policy context as it applies to the candidate's setting for practising transport planning.
- Greater clarity is needed concerning what is wanted from TPP candidates and what is being tested. Should policy context be expected to cover social, environmental and economic context?
- Current illustrations in the wording do not give enough emphasis to the importance of *context beyond transport itself* (noting not least that travel is a derived demand).
- It may be appropriate to consider how emerging technological innovations might be reflected within this unit.

A2 Laws and regulations

- This is a unit with which candidates struggle. They are focused on trying to *comply* with what they think is needed rather than *engaging* with the unit's intended development, and demonstration, of competency – partly because this intention is rather ambiguous.
- A possibility put forward is that collectively we are now less conversant with being able to 'cite the rule book'. This unit should be about the capacity to grasp the relevance and significance of laws and regulations ('the regulatory framework') rather than being able to demonstrate knowledge of their specifics. Indeed in relation to laws, it should be the capability to defer to

¹⁴ and at what geographic scale(s)?

another expert (e.g. barrister) to provide the specific knowledge. Indeed it may be helpful to seek advice from a lawyer in any reworking of this technical unit.

- The implied priority according to the ordering of this unit's wording seems the wrong way around. Indeed, 'guidance' is missing from the title of the unit. Guidance should be prioritised before regulations before laws – not the other way around. A transport planner needs to *know* about the guidance and be *aware* of the laws and able to comply with them.
- The illustrations, if they are to remain as part of this unit, themselves are out of date and indeed do not lend themselves to an international orientation of TPP.

A3 Data

- It is important to be able to weigh up and question (new) data sources in terms of their appropriateness and limitations, particularly in the era of big data (wherein reference to 'survey' may appear rather narrowing or even dated).
- It is unclear what 'principal sources and their key characteristics' means and this should include reference to their limitations. As currently worded there is a strong implication that a principal focus is upon quantitative data which then downplays the significance of qualitative data.
- It should also be clearer that data which informs transport planning analysis is not confined to traffic and transport data but encompasses economic, social and community-based data, reflective of factors influencing, and influenced by, the transport system and its use.
- This unit requires evidence of proficiency but proficiency itself is unclear here in relation to breadth and depth across different sources of data and their use.
- Greater attention in the unit should be given to clarifying expectations concerning assessment of data quality and concerning statistical techniques associated with analysis of quantitative data.

A4 Transport models and forecasting

- There is already a supplementary guidance note for this unit and it is clearly needed and should therefore be more directly linked in or cross-referenced.
- The extent of 'hands on' experience of modelling required is brought into question¹⁵. It was suggested that a candidate should be expected to demonstrate sufficient knowledge and experience to be able to ensure the most appropriate techniques are being used. They should be able to critically manage work being carried out by a specialist team or separate contractor, and be able to critically interpret and explain the outputs. Some modelling experience (whatever the type of modelling) seems a precursor to being able to fulfil these expectations.
- Current wording could be argued to provide a framework that can accommodate change and constructive challenge. However, it is ambiguous and leads to particular connotations¹⁶, for instance in terms of: (i) the types of modelling expected to be covered or considered important; and (ii) forecasting taken to imply projections / trend extrapolation.
- There is no direct reference to uncertainty or to alternative forms of forecasting such as scenario planning and this should be addressed. Indeed forecasting itself is mentioned in the title of the unit but nowhere else. A suggestion put forward in one workshop was to rename the unit "Transport models, forecasting and uncertainty". There is also a need for rewording within the unit to re-orientate the (implied) expectations.

¹⁵ One stakeholder suggested an expectation that a TPP holder should have sufficient experience to be able to act as "an intelligent buyer of services".

¹⁶ As one stakeholder put it, the wording implies "these are the models you need to know about" (with, for example, a focus upon classical numerical modelling rather than behavioural modelling).

- There can be a tendency for this to be a unit where attention focuses upon vehicle movement (and cars in particular) rather than people movement – this could be addressed through an additional bullet point or some rewording. The unit is (perhaps understandably) also very focused upon highways. Could/should a candidate satisfy the expectations of this unit if they instead have experience of other areas of focus , e.g. land use, air quality or economic modelling?
- The unit is principally focused upon the ‘how’ of modelling rather than the ‘why’. It is suggest that there is a need for the unit to give some attention to the purpose and application of modelling and forecasting within the wider process of transport planning and policymaking¹⁷.

A5 Appraisal and evaluation

- Unambiguously conveying the expectations of this unit is particularly important.
- Current wording tends to lean towards ‘compliance’ coverage and, even if able to accommodate it, does not directly encourage constructive challenge. Indeed wording focuses upon ‘standard’ techniques rather than ‘appropriate’ techniques. There is a need to understand and have experience of standard techniques while also being able to question them and consider modification or alternatives.
- The importance of *proportionality* is not drawn out in terms of understanding that at different parts in the existing process, different levels of assessment are appropriate at different stages.
- There is confusion in the wording between assessment, appraisal and evaluation; and impact could be given more prominence.
- While TPP reviewers may look for candidates’ ability to recognise the limitations of approaches, this is not readily apparent in the wording. Uncertainty should feature as part of this.
- Greater consideration of social and environmental impact (and distributional impacts) is needed.
- This is a technical unit which faces ongoing debate and challenge within the profession and therefore merits particular attention in terms of constructive challenge¹⁸. The unit should highlight a need for awareness of the reasons for undertaking appraisal and evaluation. It should be clear that this encompasses consideration of both benefits and disbenefits.

A6 Stakeholder engagement

- There is a need to be clear on what is meant by stakeholder engagement, why it is undertaken and how the results are used and with what consequence (for policies or schemes) – this is not apparent currently in the unit’s wording. Engagement is, importantly, a two-way process where transport planners are able to effectively explain and communicate ideas to others and in turn elicit meaningful reactions from them.
- Who are the different types of stakeholders that it may be appropriate to engage with? This should not imply only engagement with the general public but also with local politicians where appropriate. Indeed, distinction can and should be made between community, stakeholder and public engagement.
- In the age of digital connectivity and social media it is important that the breadth of alternative approaches to engagement is appreciated.

¹⁷ It was suggested by one stakeholder, in relation to the (mis)application of modelling, that “modellers know that a model isn’t perfect but those seeing the results can assume that it is accurate to two decimal places”.

¹⁸ As one stakeholder put it, “as a consultant you have a duty to the general public not only to your client – it’s [appraisal] not a screen to hide behind”.

- There is little or no (even implied) reference to the biases and shortcomings that can arise from stakeholder engagement or to how to limit the introduction of bias into stakeholder engagement activities and their findings.

A7 Developing strategic and master plans for transport

- There is a sense of ambiguity associated with what this unit is really expecting of TPP candidates including understanding of what is meant by transport plans and other forms of plans.
- The unit as currently set out conveys a strong emphasis on land use, when the unit should (it is assumed) be much more than this. Little if any attention is given explicitly to strategic plans in spite of their inclusion in the unit's title.
- In the face of such ambiguity this unit is potentially 'under achieving' in terms of what, with clearer guidance, it could indicate is expected of a transport planning professional.

A8 Applying the principles of transport systems design

- A transport planner should not be expected to be a transport engineer but the existence of this unit is legitimate.
- The unit as currently depicted has an extensive list of bullet points. This creates a likelihood that the list will (quickly) appear incomplete or outdated as things change over time. One of the bullet points is a duplicate of that in A7 suggesting scope for tightening up.
- There are mixed views on this approach to bullet points. It may give more detail to convey explanation and expectation of the unit but may also be misconstrued as an exhaustive coverage or conversely a coverage within which all of the points included must be addressed.

A9 Travel planning

- It is suggested that this unit may be mistitled and too narrow. With the exception of the UK and perhaps parts of Europe, the rest of the world deals with Travel Demand Management (TDM) or behaviour change, of which travel planning is only a part. An alternative title for the unit may be 'Demand management', covering a range of approaches. The focus on travel plans may reflect their emergence in the UK at the time that the TPP was launched.
- The bullet points in the text of this unit do not reflect (well enough) current practices. As with comments on unit A8, by providing the sort of detail set out in the bullet points this has the downside of becoming dated.
- No implied account is taken of changing demand associated with the digital age, such as the rise of e-shopping or the propensity for working from home to reduce demand for travel.

A10 Commercial and operational management of transport systems

- It was suggested that this is not a popular unit of choice with TPP candidates. It comes across as more of a business/economics/finance unit and one which is very specialised such that gaining experience may be challenging.
- As a unit it uniquely gives a list of options on how knowledge can be demonstrated, yet this risks limiting candidates to only items on that list or indeed implying they should be addressing more than is necessary.
- A question was raised as to whether or not this should even be included as a unit? A number of stakeholders supported its continued relevance. It was considered important for transport planners to know about operational challenges and constraints in order to manage expectations of what particular modes can or cannot achieve and to inform infrastructure improvements. Understanding how a system works is a precursor to being able to plan more successfully.

7 Review of the management skill units of TPP

Much less time was devoted in the workshops to considering the management skill units; and they were discussed as a set. This should not imply that in the second part of this 10-year review closer examination of, and potential revision to, the wording is not called for.

Professional skill - The overall title for the management skill units section was considered inappropriate with the suggestion that it should refer to 'professional' skill units. Management and leadership are two professional skills. It should be borne in mind that not all professionals become line managers. There is importance to being able to manage oneself and to taking responsibility for one's work and the management of it (something of significance to transport planners who may be working as independents). It is assumed that the overarching expectation of these units should be to be able to demonstrate being a competent professional.

The home(s) for constructive challenge – Merit was seen in being able to address constructive challenge within these units (B1 or B2 in particular) – but not exclusively. It is felt that constructive challenge should be seen as a cross cutting issue and hence should be more embedded in the technical units themselves (noting in passing that Masters course approval does *not* (currently) address management skills units). A way forward is to treat constructive challenge as something expected across the technical units such that a candidate's evidence spanning these units may then also be drawn upon to address constructive challenge as a generic competency within the management skill units (though noting that proficiency is called for in the management skills units). It was suggested that early career professionals could find such expectation appealing rather than threatening because it legitimises going beyond 'handle turning'.

Leading by example – If constructive challenge is a competency that is to be expected and encouraged in transport planners then this should become embedded in professional culture. This requires that professional leadership (unit B1) involves supporting more junior staff in terms of their training and development as regards constructive challenge. In short, there is a need for a TPP holder to be able to constructively challenge *and* to be able to help others to do so as well (something that could be fulfilled as part of a mentoring role).

Deserved attention - These units risk being 'devalued' given the 'B' labelling after the 'A' labelling of the technical skill units and being placed at the end in the TPP documentation. More attention is needed in terms of ensuring management (professional) skill units are treated with the level of attention they merit. It was noted that at TPP Professional Reviews, the 'B' units are often left until the end and there is then limited time to cover them sufficiently.

Commitment to professional standards – Unit B3 is considered important and yet by comparison to other units, lacks detail as well as scope of coverage. There is no mention of: the importance of continuing professional development (CPD); remaining abreast of current affairs; networking with others; and engaging in knowledge exchange. There is also no mention of a need for commitment to values such as equality, diversity and health and safety. One specific stakeholder suggestion was for an additional bullet point for this unit, "providing a professional view on transport planning matters within the wider context of social, environmental and economic goals". It emphasises compliance without considering the place for constructive challenge. Some concern was expressed that this unit is both last in the documentation and may be receiving least attention in TPP Professional Reviews and indeed by candidates themselves.

Contemporary wording – These units would benefit from careful review in terms of the wording detail. The wording itself needs to be contemporary to suitably resonate with its audiences. For

example, it was suggested that reference to ‘subordinates’ should be removed, with alternative terminology used.

8 Other issues relating to the TPP requirements and guidance

Having given specific consideration to individual units, stakeholder discussions also brought to light a number of other issues relating to TPP requirements and guidance.

Consistency of TPP documentation - Across the TPP guidance there is a need for more consistency to help avoid confusion for all stakeholders. Different competency levels are referred to for the same units in different guidance and different wording within each unit is used between documents because the target audience is different, but this can be ambiguous. It might be preferable for a single document to contain all guidance on technical unit requirements and for distinctions between different audiences to be drawn out within it¹⁹.

The importance of setting the scene - The need was highlighted for some introductory paragraphs at the very front of the competency requirements documentation. Such text could be an important place to convey to all TPP stakeholders a common understanding of expectation and how the guidance and detail should be interpreted. The text might be prepared by TPP reviewers.

Retrospective analysis of TPP Professional Reviews – Notwithstanding its non-trivial nature, an audit of past reviews was suggested to understand candidates’ distribution across units of their level of competency (awareness, knowledge, experience, proficiency) and the TPP reviewers’ assessments by comparison. This could help inform overall consideration of how to balance breadth versus of depth of competencies expected of transport planning professionals and identify the relative prominence of different units.

A place for innovation in the TPP requirements? - ‘Innovation’ (and research) do not really feature across the technical units. While this may be seen to relate to proficiency rather than experience, it was noted that ‘innovation’ was seen as a means of differentiating between IEng and CEng. Given the extent of technological innovation associated with existing and future mobility, it would be helpful to consider what bearing this might have on transport planning competencies.

Constructive challenge for the senior route – It might be reasonable to expect that a senior route candidate should be better placed to be able to demonstrate constructive challenge. Meanwhile, it is recognised that the ‘bar’ for senior route is currently in line with that for the standard route. One suggestion was for a senior route candidate to be asked to write an essay in which they are able to articulate their ability to constructively challenge while drawing upon their knowledge and experience of orthodox practices. Another was for a personal statement to be asked for, giving candidates the opportunity to demonstrate competencies and their contribution to the profession.

A need for wording that helps - A generally held view is that whilst it may be argued that the current wording *allows* for flexibility of interpretation to accommodate a changing environment for transport planning, this is not the same as that wording *helping*. Indeed, some of the wording is quite simply out of date. It would be helpful to test any revisions to wording on the intended audience(s) for the documentation.

¹⁹ The TPP website currently includes a flow chart which points to the relevant documentation at each stage such that anyone only sees the items they need to see rather than being overloaded with everything.

Keeping international in mind – With an intention to widen access to the TPP qualification beyond the UK, it is important that this review and any revisions flowing from it is accommodating of this intention. Indeed it is suggested that particular attention should be given to ensuring that the revised TPP documentation is flexible enough to be appealing to those transport planning professionals working outside of the UK. Subsequent CIHT/TPS discussions concerning internationalisation of TPP have concurred - the international route to TPP should not alter TPP requirements but documentation should be able to accommodate local contexts (with additional guidance as appropriate for non-UK applicants, possibly with some country specific content).

Guiding the mentors – Many of the workshop participants who have obtained the TPP have in turn become TPP mentors themselves. This is very encouraging indeed. However, to ensure that those mentors are best positioned to support upcoming TPP candidates, it is important that they have appropriate and timely guidance and training opportunities.

9 Recommendations

This TPP stakeholder engagement exercise has revealed a number of considerations concerning the current format of the TPP in terms of its competencies and how they are expressed. It seems clear that the paperwork for the TPP would benefit from, and indeed merits, a thorough review and revision. This will not be a trivial task and should be treated accordingly with the care and attention it deserves. Recommendations for how to proceed are as follows:

- (i) PSC in liaison with PMG should seek to put in place a small team, of perhaps three people, who are resourced appropriately to take a project-based approach to methodically revising the TPP paperwork.
- (ii) This revision process should be strongly informed and guided by the issues raised by TPP stakeholders that are set out in this report.
- (iii) Revisions to the TPP paperwork – notably the competency requirements themselves and related further guidance - should seek to ensure that:
 - a. constructive challenge is duly accounted for;
 - b. the requirements and their wording are both in tune with the current times while also being mindful of being able to stand the test of time;
 - c. the paperwork has an enabling function for all stakeholders in clarifying expectations and thereby helping guide TPP candidates effectively on their journey towards achieving TPP status; and
 - d. the international relevance and applicability of the paperwork is addressed.
- (iv) Revisions to the paperwork should have an accompanying record of explanation for those revisions thereby providing a rationale. This is likely to be of value to present *and* future stakeholders in appreciating why revisions have been made. It may also be important as a point of reference in any subsequent review of the TPP.
- (v) TPP stakeholders should be given the opportunity to provide comment on the draft revisions that are proposed before these are finalised and signed off. It would be prudent to include a non-UK perspective at this stage with the future internationalisation of TPP in mind.
- (vi) Subsequent consideration should be given to further training and communication activities that can help ensure widespread awareness of the revisions and bring about appropriate adjustments to stakeholder behaviours in relation to the process leading up to and including the award of TPP to an individual.

As part of responding to these recommendations there will be a need to address any implications for the Portfolio of Technical Knowledge (PTK), the Technical Report route and the TPS Professional Development Scheme (PDS). It will be helpful to consult PDS documentation (with its interpretation of National Occupational Standards) as part of the response. A revision to TPP requirements and guidance would in turn merit a review (and probably revision) of PDS documentation to ensure alignment.

Part of the workshop exercise also involved a separate discussion with Masters course providers to review the expectations required of a course to become TPP-approved and the process of seeking and granting approval itself. PSC will be considering the treatment of Masters course approval and any changes that are appropriate in light of this.

10 Acknowledgements

Funding to cover the expenses for running the five workshop has been provided by the PMG. Sue Stevens is gratefully acknowledged for organisation of the workshops. Thanks are owed to Transport Scotland and CIHT for hosting the workshops. I am most grateful to all those individuals who gave their time freely to participate in the workshops. They have willingly shared their experience and expertise in the interests of helping ensure the TPP remains a symbol of professionalism in transport planning. It has been my privilege to have been able to play my part in this important 10-year review of TPP.

Appendix 1 – Stakeholder workshops - participants

Richard Allsop TPP, University College London – PTK Assessor and past Member of PSC (unable to attend but submitted written feedback in his absence)

Alan Bailes TPP, ttc – TPP Reviewer and PDS Reviewer and Mentor

Roger Bird, Newcastle University – TPP approved Masters course provider and past PTK Assessor

Keith Buchan TPP, MTRU – Transport Planning Society Skills Director, Member of PSC and past Chair of TPS

Mike Cottee TPP, Cottee Transport Planning – TPP Review Auditor

Susan Cross TPP, CH2M – TPP Reviewer

John Daly TPP, Arup – PDS Mentor

Ray Greenwood TPP, Pembrokeshire County Council (unable to attend but submitted written feedback in his absence)

Neil Halket TPP, Aecom – TPP Reviewer

Peter Hardy TPP, Systra – TPP Mentor (unable to attend but submitted written feedback in his absence)

Sheila Holden TPP, The STEP Consultancy – TPP Review Auditor, past Chair of PSC and past President of CIHT

Caroline Hunt, CIHT

Steve Hunter TPP, Steer Davies Gleave – TPP Reviewer and Chair of PSC

Catherine Jameson TPP, Jacobs – PDS Mentor

Glenn Lyons TPP (hon), University of the West of England / Mott MacDonald – Member of PSC, CIHT Trustee and past Chair of TPS

Lynda McClurg TPP, Sweco

Keith McGillivray TPP, Systra

Steve Miller TPP – TPP Reviewer and Member of PSC

Derek Palmer TPP – TPP Reviewer and past Member of PSC

John Parkin, University of the West of England - TPP approved Masters course provider (unable to attend but submitted written feedback in his absence)

Yogesh Patel TPP, Atkins

Dimitris Potoglou, Cardiff University – TPP approved Masters course provider

Rebecca Rankin TPP, Atkins

Nick Richardson TPP, Mott MacDonald – past Chair of PSC, past Chair of TPS, past (alternating) Chair of PMG (unable to attend but submitted written feedback in his absence)

Nick Ruxton-Boyle TPP, Project Centre

Mike Slinn TPP – TPP Reviewer, Member of PMG and Past President of CIHT

Bill Smith TPP, Arup – TPP Mentor

Colin Smith TPP, WSP (*unable to attend but submitted written feedback in his absence*)

Claire Stephens TPP, Systra

Sue Stevens, CIHT – Director of Education and Membership and Member of PSC

Kit Tang TPP, AECOM

Jenny Taylor TPP, Systra

Stefan Trinder TPP, TfL

Stuart Turnbull TPP, Jacobs – Member of PSC

Tom Van Vuren TPP, Mott MacDonald – TPP Reviewer and PDS Mentor

Andy Wells TPP, TRL – TPP Mentor




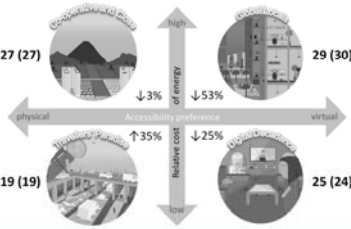
Tony Whiteing, University of Leeds - TPP approved Masters course provider




Claire Whitfield TPP, WSP – PDS Mentor and Member of PSC

Michelle Wood TPP, PTRC – TPP Reviewer

Keith Youngman TPP - PDS Review Manager and past PTK Assessor

Appendix 2 – Stakeholder workshops - slides

 <p>TRANSPORT PLANNING PROFESSIONAL</p> <p>TPP Professional Standards Committee: Stakeholder workshops – January / February 2018</p> <h3>Reviewing the knowledge requirements of the TPP – assessing suitability for today’s transport planning</h3> <p>Glenn Lyons, Mott MacDonald Professor of Future Mobility, UWE Bristol</p>	<h3>Agenda</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background and context [20 minutes] • Aims of the workshop [10 minutes] • Constructive challenge [30 minutes] • Review of technical and management units [60 minutes] • Practical suggestions for the PSC and PMG to consider [20 minutes] • Any other business [10 minutes] 																
<h2>Background and context</h2>	<h3>Transport Planning Professional</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched in 2008 • At its outset, expected that after a period of operating, the TPP competencies should be reviewed <i>to ensure continued relevance for today’s environment</i> 																
 <p>Future Uncertainty in Transport – Understanding and Responding to an Evolving Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 regional workshops involving 200 CIHT members • Participants from both public and private sectors spanning highway engineering, transport planning, development control, intelligent transport systems and transport modelling • A safe environment for a ‘deep dive’ into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring views on uncertainty and plausible futures • considering alternative pathways to how transport planning, policy and investment decisions are made • Final report including recommendations 	<p>↓↑ - % change in total car travel (vehicle miles travelled)</p>  <p>share of collective plausibility per scenario before (after) group discussion</p>																
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>REGIME-COMPLIANT</th> <th>REGIME TESTING</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>predicted and practical outlooks</td> <td>plausible/preferred outlooks</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transport – Economy coupling</td> <td>Access – Economy coupling</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Weak planning</td> <td>Strong planning</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Concealed uncertainty</td> <td>Exposed uncertainty</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Justified decisions</td> <td>Guided decisions</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Benefit-Cost Analysis</td> <td>Real Options Analysis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Predict and provide</td> <td>Decide and provide</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Which path-way are we on?</p> <p>Which path-way is desirable and achievable?</p>	REGIME-COMPLIANT	REGIME TESTING	predicted and practical outlooks	plausible/preferred outlooks	Transport – Economy coupling	Access – Economy coupling	Weak planning	Strong planning	Concealed uncertainty	Exposed uncertainty	Justified decisions	Guided decisions	Benefit-Cost Analysis	Real Options Analysis	Predict and provide	Decide and provide	<h3>Findings</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad consensus that the future is deeply uncertain • A 53% reduction in total car travel over the next 25 years is as credible (if not more so) than a 35% increase • Considerable dissatisfaction with our present approaches (typically seen as ‘regime compliant’) • Considerable appetite to move towards a different approach (‘regime testing’) • Accountability (due process) has grown while responsibility (stewardship of the future) has diminished • Sense of ‘professional impotence’ – risk of exposure in challenging orthodoxy and inadequacy of skills and resources
REGIME-COMPLIANT	REGIME TESTING																
predicted and practical outlooks	plausible/preferred outlooks																
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<h3>Recommendation</h3> <p><i>Those responsible for overseeing and supporting relevant professional qualifications should look to establish whether candidates can demonstrate both an awareness and application of the regime-testing approach and a capacity to challenge dogma.</i></p> <p>The CIHT and Transport Planning Society should consider a critical review of the skills areas for which competencies are examined for the Transport Planning Professional qualification. Such a review might question how skills areas are interpreted and in turn how competencies are developed in individuals and whether sufficient challenge to dogma and encouragement to contemplate regime testing thinking is apparent or expected. It would be appropriate to directly engage universities in any such review. Similar consideration would be appropriate for other professional qualifications.</p>	<h3>Responding to the recommendation</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval (with resources) from the TPP Partnership Management Group to proceed with addressing the CIHT FUTURES recommendation • Stage 1 – desk review of the TPP knowledge requirements (undertaken within the TPP Professional Standards Committee) • Stage 2 – roundtable workshops with key stakeholder groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPP qualification holders • TPP reviewers • TPS Professional Development Scheme mentors • Providers of TPP-approved university masters courses • Portfolio of Technical Knowledge (PTK) assessors 																

<p>Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your broad reaction to the CIHT FUTURES findings – do they resonate with your views and experience? 2. Do you feel this review exercise is timely and how strongly do you feel it is needed, and why? 	<p>Aims of the workshop</p> <p>Being mindful of the intentions of the TPP qualification:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To consider how important constructive challenge is as a competency in transport planners and TPP candidates in particular. 2. To consider whether constructive challenge of orthodoxy is sufficiently encouraged, developed and tested in TPP candidates. 3. To review the existing technical and management units of the TPP and identify any concerns over fitness for purpose with suggestions on how these might be addressed. 4. To identify practical suggestions concerning any changes to the processes, support and guidance relating to the TPP qualification and its attainment.
<p>Constructive challenge</p>	<p>Constructive challenge in the lived experience of transport planners</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How conscious are you of facing limitations in the approaches you (are expected to) use in your professional lives; can you give examples? 2. How much agency do you feel you have to openly highlight such limitations and/or consider alternative approaches; can you give examples? 3. How important do you consider the ability is for a transport planning professional to constructively challenge?
<p>Constructive challenge as an aspect of the TPP</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. From your stakeholder perspective, do you feel constructive challenge is something adequately addressed within the TPP; and why? 2. How, if at all, should or might it be addressed differently? 	<p>Review of technical and management units</p>
<p>Technical Skill Units</p> <p>POLICIES AND REGULATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> E • A1 - Working within the policy context E • A2 - Laws and regulations <p>TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P • A3 - Data E • A4 - Transport Models & forecasting E • A5 - Appraisal and evaluation E • A6 - Stakeholder engagement <p>DESIGN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A • A7 - Developing strategic and master plans A • A8 - Applying the principles of transport systems design <p>OPERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A • A9 - Travel planning A • A10 - Commercial & operational management of transport systems <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p> Skills unit (broadly) OK</p> <p> Unclear / ambiguous</p> <p> Skills unit (partially) deficient</p> </div>	<p>For each skills unit</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your traffic light assessment? (✓/✗) 2. What are your observations about: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the overall unit? (ii) any specific element of the unit? 3. Does the unit as current represented miss anything? <p style="text-align: right;"><i>We will address the units in an order starting with those of greatest concern</i></p>
<p>Management Skill Units</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P • B1 - Professional Leadership P • B2 - Interpersonal Skills p • B3 - Commitment and Professional Conduct <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there any concerns overall with B1 to B3? 2. Is this a possible 'home' for locating competency regarding constructive challenge? 	<p>Practical suggestions for PSC/PMG to consider</p>

<p>Assuming evolution not revolution...</p> <p>Do you have (further) practical suggestions concerning possible changes to the following relating to the TPP qualification and its attainment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) processes(ii) support(iii) guidance	<p>Any other business</p>
<p>Thank you!</p>	