

How to become a member of the Council for Independent Education - CIFE.

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in CIFE membership. This guide explains eligibility, benefits, application process, costs and other obligations. Where detailed information is on the CIFE website, at www.cife.org.uk, this Guide links to the relevant site pages.

Eligibility

CIFE is an association of colleges in which a majority of students are preparing for GCSE, A-level or other comparable post-GCSE examinations. Member Colleges generally have a substantial number of post-sixteen direct entry students and are expected to have a current and satisfactory full inspection review or inspection audit from one of the DfE recognised inspecting bodies. Most CIFE colleges are happy to be described as 'Independent sixth-form colleges'.

You'll find more details in section 3 of the [CIFE Constitution](#).

Benefits of membership

What is CIFE for, and why belong to it?

You'll find quite a bit of information online which will give you a picture of what CIFE is about and why it is worth belonging to. '[About CIFE](#)', and '[Frequently asked questions](#)' are student-facing pages which cover the questions families looking for a CIFE college most often ask. [Independent sixth-form colleges](#) compares our sector with mainstream independent schools and [Briefing notes](#) gives further information about CIFE and student achievements. Finally, '[why colleges join CIFE](#)' summarises the direct and indirect benefits colleges enjoy through CIFE membership.

Costs

CIFE is a not-for-profit organisation whose aims, and organisation are described in the [CIFE Constitution](#). Its activities are paid for by subscriptions each college pays, and through commission colleges pay when they enrol students recommended by CIFE.

Subscriptions are calculated from a standard levy plus a sum based on student numbers, up to a maximum of 300 students. In 2014 the smallest college paid just under £500, the largest just under £1500. In practice CIFE's commission income was such in 2014 that it waived subscriptions, but that's not guaranteed to happen every year!

Colleges pay **commission** to CIFE if they recruit students whom CIFE has introduced to them. Commission is based on 10% of the first three terms' fees and is of course only payable when the student pays the college. In recent years commission fees have been CIFE's major source of income and colleges have of course benefitted from the extra enrolments.

Other obligations of membership

Members are of course expected to abide by the [CIFE Constitution](#), and the Membership Application Form (see below) emphasises that. We should also mention that CIFE is a small organisation and as such relies a lot on its members' input to develop new initiatives - but of course members differ considerably in their resources and there is no requirement to devote time to CIFE work.

Application process

The first stage is to [contact the CIFE secretary](#) who can answer any questions you may have, put you in touch with CIFE members if need be, and, should you wish, initiate formal application procedures.

Once you have decided to apply we would expect you to send in a completed Membership Application Form (see Appendix 1). The Secretary will then arrange for a senior CIFE principal to visit your college. The purpose of the visit is partly to find out a bit more about your college and partly to give you a more detailed insight into CIFE. It is not an inspection - we rely upon the fact that you will already have been successfully inspected by a DfE recognised body - but your visitor may want to talk about aspects of the inspection report, especially if you have been asked to make improvements.

The final stage is a ballot of members, as described in section 3.4 of the [CIFE Constitution](#).

Application to join the Council for Independent Education

This form should be completed by the Principal or by a person of equivalent position.

The form below shows what needs to be completed. If you would like to apply please contact the CIFE Secretary (enquiries@cife.org.uk) and ask to be sent a link to an online version which may be electronically completed, signed and submitted

Name of college:

Name, position in college, contact phone number and email address of the person completing this form:

Total number of full-time students at the most recent DfE census date:

Number of students who are taking post GCSE-level courses:

Name(s) of the college's DfE-recognised Inspecting Body (ies):

Year of most recent Inspection:

Please email a copy of the full inspection report to the CIFE Secretary

Has the college made any substantive changes to its inspection status, provision, management structure or ownership since last inspected? If 'yes', please send details to the CIFE Secretary

What is the college's UKVI sponsorship status? If that status is currently under review by UKVI please send details to the CIFE Secretary

Declarations

1. I have read the CIFE Constitution and will ensure that the college complies with its provisions. In particular I will, either personally or through properly delegated staff, ensure that:
 - The CIFE Secretary is informed of any substantive changes in inspection status, provision, management structure or ownership
 - The CIFE Secretary is told when the college is inspected by any of its accrediting bodies, and is promptly supplied with a copy of the inspection report
 - The CIFE Secretary is informed of any changes to the college's UKVI sponsorship status
 - Requests from CIFE for information are promptly and accurately dealt with
 - The college meets its financial obligations to CIFE
2. I understand that membership of CIFE resides in the college rather than an individual post holder and, where possible I will ensure that, if I no longer represent the college, my successor is made aware of the college's membership and obligations.
3. I have the authority to make this application on behalf of my college

Signed

Date