



Paul Blackett was the Medical Engineering Operations Manager in Preston up until 2019. He is now a Facilitator for the National Performance Advisory Clinical Engineering Groups. He joined as a moderator for the IPEM Clinical Technologist Training Scheme in 2006 and is also the Assistant Registrar on the RCT Management Panel. Paul holds a BSc (Hons) in Computing with Electronics.

‘Be a moderator and see the world!’ How could he resist?! The temptation was too great for Paul and he signed up – he could hardly wait for his first moderator letter to drop through the letterbox!

A few weeks went by and his first ‘assignment’ arrived, he was going to... Glasgow. Not quite the Barbados General Hospital that he had hoped for but, nevertheless, he made his way northwards to meet his first student on an IPEM Training Scheme. Over the years Paul has been a moderator for many trainees at various hospitals and has always received a warm welcome by the trainees and colleagues that he has met.

Paul says that being a moderator is a privilege; he gets to meet the future technologists of our profession and helps to ensure they become rounded, knowledgeable and competent technologists fit to meet the challenge of medical engineering work. It’s quite a responsibility for those who deliver, assess and moderate the training scheme.

What does he do, you ask? The trainees he has moderated have mostly been mature entries with skills and knowledge usually gained from industry or local business. When he first meets them they have already had a training plan mapped out for them and it is Paul’s role to make sure that they understand what is required from them, help with their portfolio development and to assess them at certain stages.

Assessments over the training period cover practical issues such as maintaining medical equipment and also testing their knowledge base to make sure they are learning from the scheme. At the completion of their training he visits for the last time. On this occasion the external moderator is joined by a supporting moderator and once again practical work is assessed and knowledge tested through an interview or viva. They mark the trainee and portfolio and, all being well, the IPEM office communicates the good news to a newly qualified technologist. It’s not a big commitment to make, perhaps a couple of days a year, and he finds it rewarding.

If you think you might be interested, then give it a go. IPEM support all those involved in the training scheme with training days and meetings so you’re never on your own. Full travel and accommodation expenses are also covered. Oh, and you get to visit all those exotic hospitals in far off countries...!