British Computer Society (BCS)

The BCS, founded in 1957, is the Chartered Institute for Information Technology (IT) and has over 70,000 members worldwide. It is building a strong network of IT practitioners, all committed to their professional development. BCS provides access to services and benefits that will support its members at every stage of their professional development including career development tools and the latest information resources and networking opportunities. Depending on your level of membership you are allowed to place letters after your name (post nominals): Associated Member (AMBCS), Member (MBCS) and Fellow (FBCS).

BCS is a Chartered Engineering Institution. If you are a BCS member at Professional Member (MBCS) grade or above, and you meet the Engineering Council (UK-SPEC) criteria, you can apply for Chartered Engineer (CEng) or Incorporated Engineer (IEng). BCS is also a Science Council licensed body. If you are a BCS member at MBCS grade or above, and you meet the Science Council criteria, you may apply for Chartered Scientist (CSci).

The BCS can award Chartered IT Professional (CITP) status. It is a rigorously assessed, employer led standard, recently updated in line with the needs of industry leaders, government and the academic community.

Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)

The IET is one of the world's leading professional societies for the engineering and technology community, with more than 150,000 members in 127 countries and offices in Europe, North America and Asia-Pacific. The IET provides a global knowledge network to facilitate the exchange of ideas and promote the positive role of science, engineering and technology in the world.

The IET, founded in 1871, provides its members with a professional home for life enabling them to engage with the IET global engineering and technology community and access essential products and services. If your grade of membership is member or fellow, you can put MIET or FIET after your name.

The IET is licensed by the Engineering Council to assess applicants under the UK-SPEC criteria and award the following professional engineering qualifications: Chartered Engineer (CEng) Incorporated Engineer (IEng) Engineering Technician (EngTech) and ICT Technicians (ICTTech)
ACM, the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, delivers resources that advance computing as a science and a profession. ACM provides the computing field's premier Digital Library and serves its members and the computing profession with leading-edge publications, conferences, and career resources.

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)

The IEEE began in 1884. It is the world's largest professional association dedicated to advancing technological innovation and excellence for the benefit of humanity. IEEE and its members inspire a global community through IEEE's highly cited publications, conferences, technology standards, and professional and educational activities. IEEE creates an environment where members collaborate on world-changing technologies – from computing and sustainable energy systems, to aerospace, communications, robotics, healthcare, and more. The strategic plan of IEEE is driven by an envisioned future that realizes the full potential of the role of IEEE in advancing technology for humanity.

The IEEE has over 395,000 members in 160 countries.

IDB's Final Remarks

All these organisations expect their members to work within a code of ethics. By becoming a member you agree to this.

All have special interest groups (SIG): you should consider becoming actively engaged with the work of a relevant SIG; it will take up your time, but you should find that you get more out of it than you put in.

If you are going to work in the computing industry you should demonstrate your commitment to behaving professionally by joining either the BCS or the IET in the first instance and later putting yourself forward for inclusion on the Engineering Council register as either a Chartered or Incorporated Engineer.

You should consider joining either the BCS or the IET as a student. The BCS and IET are UK organisations.

The ACM and IEEE are US organisations, with no route to Chartered or Incorporated Engineer. You join the ACM or the IEEE for your own discounted copies of what are excellent journals.