Israeli Society for Conservation

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Becoming a qualifying profession

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More than one model of 'profession'
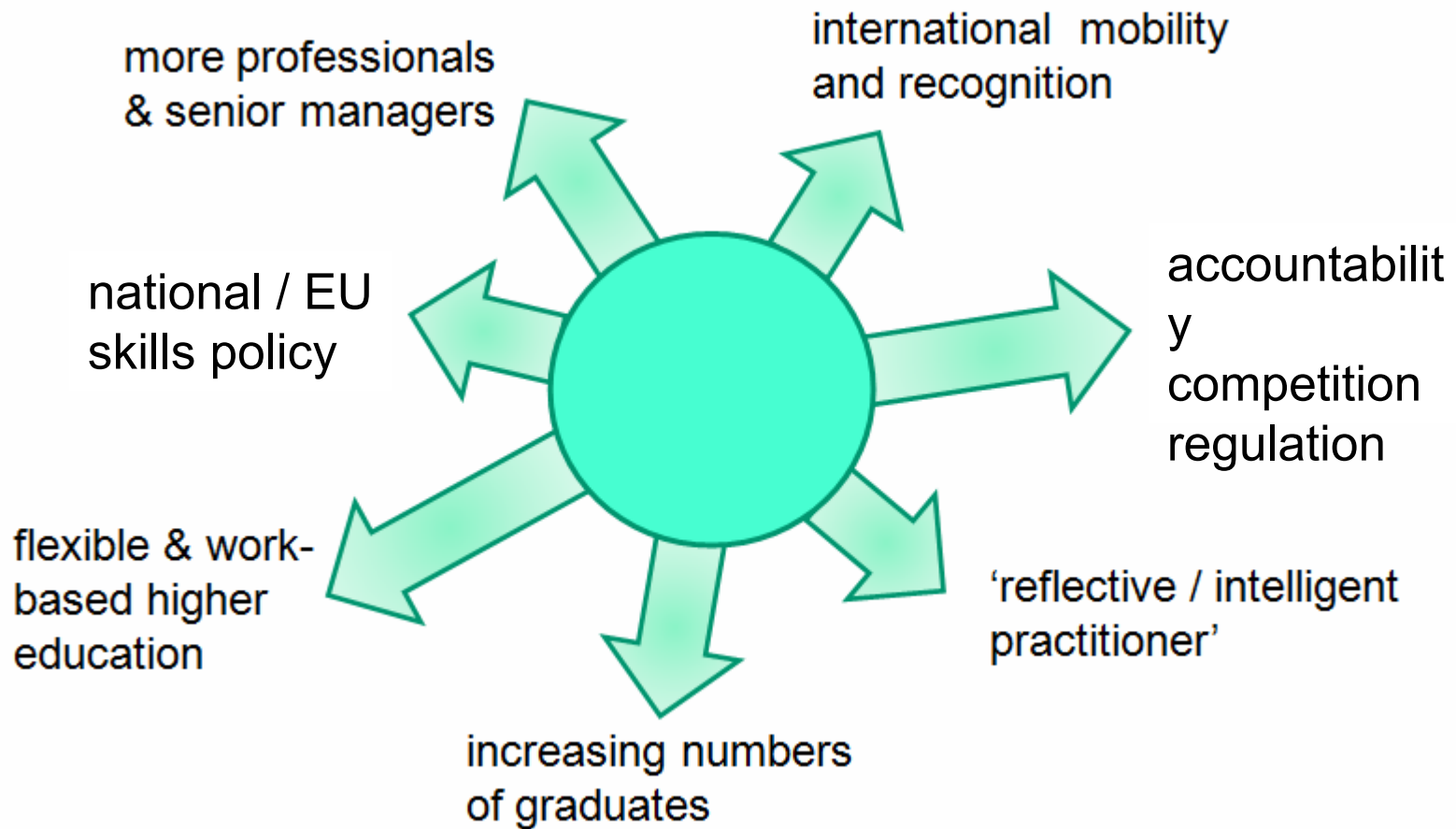
❖   classical (ancient learned professions)

❖   craft / trade guilds

❖   technical / bureaucratic (Industrial Revolution)

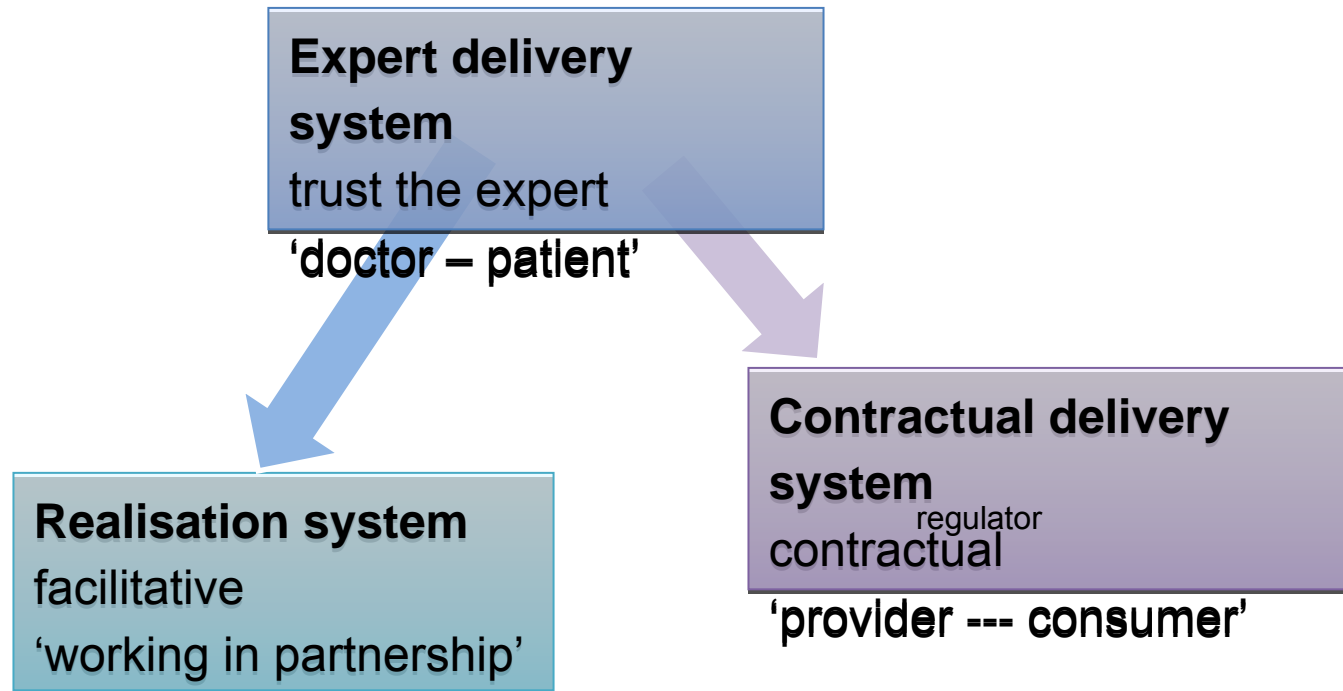❖   reflective / interpretive (late 20th c.)

Being a professional

❖ have and use specialist expertise

❖ make a commitment to a set of values and principles

❖ exercise independent thought and judgement

(after Hoyle & John, 1995)

Influences on professions

more professionals & senior managers

international mobility and recognition

national / EU skills policy

accountability competition regulation

flexible & work-based higher education

'reflective / intelligent practitioner'

increasing numbers of graduates

Professional relationships

Expert delivery system
trust the expert
'doctor – patient'

Realisation system
facilitative
'working in partnership'

Contractual delivery system
regulator
contractual
'provider --- consumer'

Trends

- ❖ More graduates ...

  - ❖ but also wider range of routes to qualifying

  - ❖ including non-graduate and mature-entry routes

- ❖ Standards of practice

- ❖ Assessment of practice for fully qualified status

- ❖ Maintaining qualified status

Distinguish ...

Qualification
marks achievement on a course or programme; permanent once awarded

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Qualified status
marks ability to practise proficiently; can be revoked or resigned from
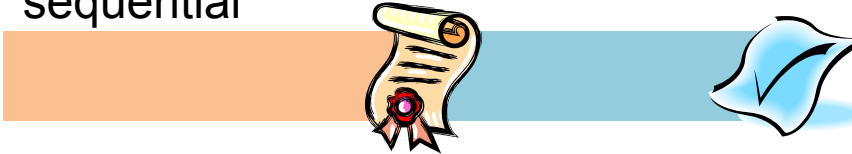
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Registration as a firm
following approval of business practice, client references, insurance etc.; usually for a defined period

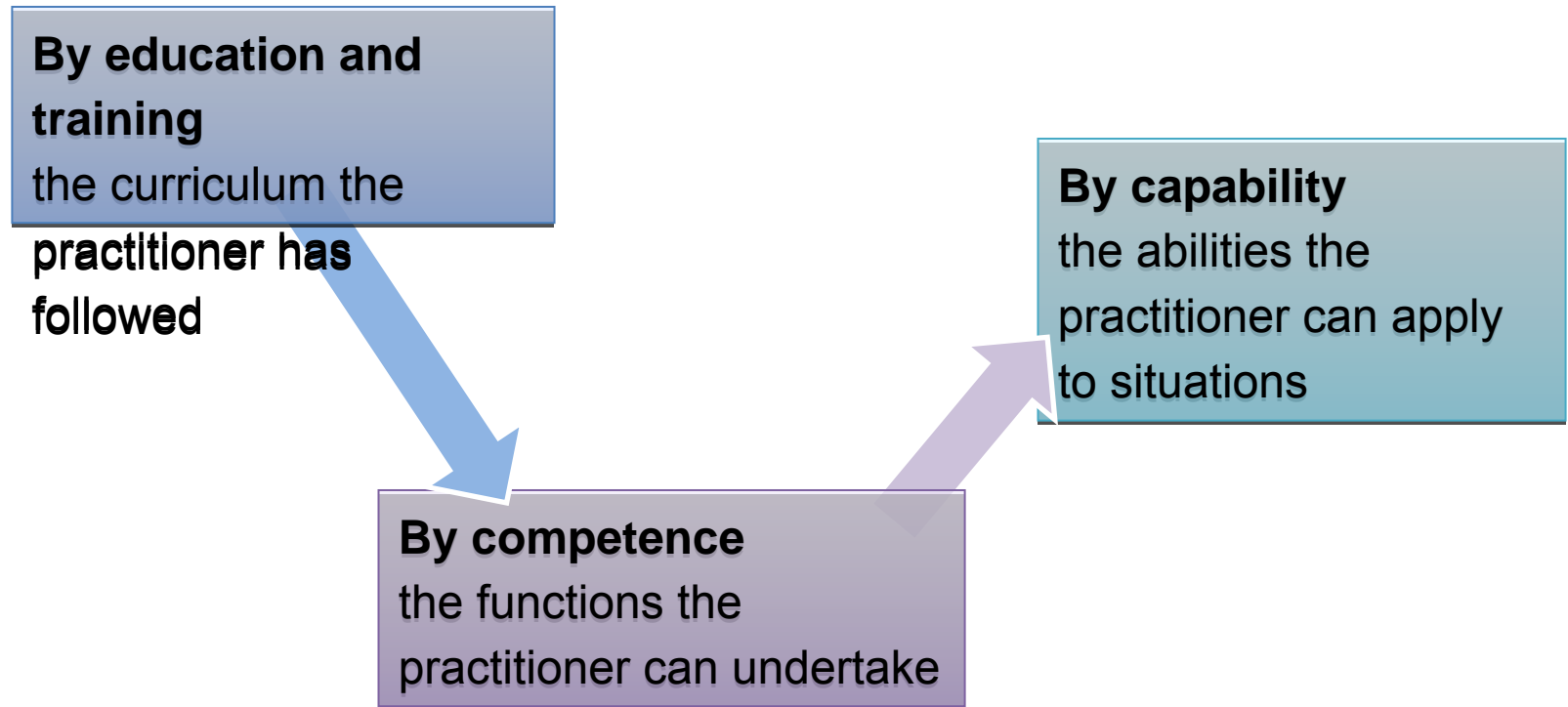# Different kinds of routes

parallel

sequential

integrated

experiential

Defining a profession

By education and training
the curriculum the practitioner has followed

By competence
the functions the practitioner can undertake

By capability
the abilities the practitioner can apply to situations

International perspectives

Anglophone:

- free-market assumption

- independent professional bodies grant qualified status

European:

- regulatory assumption

- academic qualification plus state registration

Differences are simplified and can be exaggerated.

Who grants qualified status?

Independent professional body: council elected by members, can include external observers but power rests with elected council

Professional body with statutory representation: elected members plus appointees e.g. from government or other agencies.

State registration body: council is appointed by a government organisation; can have some members elected by registrants.

Starting-points for qualified status

Responsibilities:

❖ To the practitioner: to ensure qualified status is granted in a way that is transparent, fair, proportional, unbiased, and consistent.

issue of unlawfully restricting practice

❖ To users of professional services: to ensure that qualified status is fit for purpose, i.e. qualified practitioners can do what the profession claims.

issue of making false claims about ability to practise

Reference points

National standards for public qualifications and assessments, e.g. as published by:

- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
- Office of the Qualifications and Examinations Regulator (Ofqual)
- Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
- National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI).

ISO 17024 (certification of persons).

European principles on qualification frameworks (EQF), mutual recognition of qualifications, credit transfer (ECTS), higher education structures (Bologna agreement).

Principles of certification (1)

- ❖ open access within clear boundaries
- ❖ no unjustifiable barriers to access
- ❖ use valid, justifiable and publicly-accessible criteria
- ❖ fair, valid, robust and proportional assessment process
- ❖ avoid conflicts of interest
- ❖ quality assurance process
- ❖ criteria and process for appeal
- ❖ criteria for maintaining qualified status
- ❖ fair process for revoking qualified status.

Principles of certification (2)

❖ accountable system of governance

❖ periodic review of process and standards

❖ benchmarked intelligently to:

  − other professions nationally

  − national qualification system

  − international standards within profession

❖ constancy of purpose and principles.

(end)