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EAB

Engineering Accreditation Board

**EAB Accreditation
Briefing Manual for
Educational
Institutions seeking
accreditation against
AHEP 4.0**

March 2023

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Introduction

This manual is for educational institutions seeking joint accreditation, via the Engineering Accreditation Board (EAB), of degree programmes as providing some or all of the underpinning knowledge and understanding for Incorporated (IEng) or Chartered (CEng) Engineer registration. It is intended to assist educational institutions in preparing for an EAB accreditation visit.

A joint accreditation visit involving several professional engineering institutions is suitable where there is sufficient commonality amongst the programmes being put forward for accreditation. In brief, those educational institutions opting for an EAB accreditation visit will have one point of contact (EAB Secretariat) and will host a single accreditation visit for the assessment of the degree programme(s). There will be one final visit report incorporating the requirements and recommendations of all the participating professional engineering institutions.

All professional engineering institutions that are licensed by the [Engineering Council](#) to accredit academic programmes are members of EAB, and the Engineering Council provides the secretariat.

This information and many of the documents in the manual are available on the [EAB webpage](#).

Why seek accreditation?

Accreditation is a peer review process and applies to individual engineering degree programmes. An accredited degree is a marketable advantage for the educational institution and aids recruitment of those students intending to become Incorporated or Chartered Engineers. In turn it prepares those students for a career as a professionally registered engineer.

An accredited degree has a mark of quality recognised by employers in the United Kingdom and that supports the needs of engineering graduates in an international marketplace. The Engineering Council is signatory to three [international recognition agreements](#) with non-UK engineering organisations, which provide mutual recognition of accredited degree programmes.

The accreditation process should be a partnership between professional engineering institutions and educational institutions. The EAB strongly supports a continuing dialogue between educational institutions and professional engineering institutions throughout the five-yearly accreditation visits. Accreditation overall should be seen as a developmental process which constantly improves the provision of the programmes and meets the requirements of the current workplace.

Accredited degrees meet the Engineering Council's required output standards and provide some of the knowledge, understanding, skills and values that together contribute to the development of an engineer's competence. Importantly, the Engineering Council's standards have been adopted by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency as the subject benchmark statement for engineering. They are published as a standard, the Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes ([AHEP](#)).

Accreditation is carried out by the individual professional engineering institutions under licence from the Engineering Council. A degree programme may be accredited by more than one professional engineering institution, particularly where it spans several engineering disciplines.

Which degree programmes can be accredited?

All degree programmes including Bachelors, Bachelors with Honours, Doctorates, Integrated Masters (MEng) and other Masters (MSc, MSci, etc) may be accredited subject to professional engineering institution agreement. Professional engineering institutions will also consider requests to accredit Foundation degrees and top-up degrees as partially meeting the requirements for IEng registration. The period of accreditation is up to five years.

Recognised course search database

The Engineering Council holds the definitive list of accredited degree programmes that partially or fully satisfy the academic requirements for IEng and CEng registration. Accreditation 'with further learning required' or 'as further learning' can be awarded where a qualification is at a level where it meets some but not all of the academic requirements for a particular level of registration and another appropriately accredited qualification would be required for individuals to demonstrate the knowledge and understanding required for registration, eg a Bachelors degree with further learning required for CEng plus an MSc accredited as further learning for CEng would meet the academic requirements for CEng. There are currently over 10,000 degree programmes listed on the [recognised course search](#). The database also lists recognised (approved or accredited) apprenticeships and qualifications. All apprenticeships, including degree apprenticeships, are listed within the apprenticeships area of the database. Foundation degrees are listed within the qualifications area as they may be accredited for IEng with further learning required and/or approved or accredited for EngTech or ICTTech.

All degree programmes listed in the database are accredited by intake date. The course search database is updated by professional engineering institution staff following decisions made by their accreditation committees, and approved and published by the Engineering Council.

Educational institutions must ensure that statements they publish or provide to other bodies for publication about accreditation by professional engineering institutions, including Key Information Sets (KIS), accurately reflect the information published in ACAD.

IEng and CEng accreditation

Engineering Council policy introduced in 2009 whereby all honours degrees accredited from intake year 1999 were deemed to automatically have dual accreditation for IEng was revoked in 2021.

This means that an honours degree accredited for CEng (with further learning required) will, for intakes of students following implementation of this change:

- a. continue to be treated by professional engineering institutions (PEIs) licensed by the Engineering Council to assess candidates for IEng registration as a qualification that demonstrates knowledge and understanding for IEng
- b. not be automatically accredited for IEng, and will therefore not be recognised as an engineering technology degree internationally (ie under the Sydney Accord)

For accreditations commenced after the effective date providers will be able to apply for both IEng and CEng accreditation for their honours degrees if they wish. The accrediting PEI(s) will need to verify that the programmes deliver both sets of learning outcomes. As a minimum this will require the HEIs to submit module mapping matrices against both IEng and CEng learning outcomes.

All Honours degrees accredited for CEng registration (with further learning required) from intake September 1999 until the expiry of the accreditation period applicable as of the end of August 2022 will continue to be considered to have automatic dual accreditation for IEng.

EUR-ACE® label

EUR-ACE® is the European quality label for engineering degree programmes. In the UK the Engineering Council is able to award the EUR-ACE® label to first and second cycle engineering degrees accredited by a licensed professional engineering institution since 2006.

For more information: www.engc.org.uk/EURACE

UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence and Commitment (UK-SPEC)

The UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence and Commitment ([UK-SPEC](#)) describes the requirements that must be met for registration, and provides examples of ways of achieving these. UK-SPEC was implemented in 2004 and signalled a shift to the focus being on learning outcomes.

Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes (AHEP)

All accredited degree programmes are assessed against criteria set out in AHEP. AHEP criteria are expressed as learning outcomes, giving educational institutions flexibility to deliver innovatively.

Educational institutions should refer to the most up to date versions of UK-SPEC and AHEP when planning or reviewing degree programmes.

Approval and Accreditation of Qualifications and Apprenticeships Handbook (AAQA)

Apprenticeships (including Degree Apprenticeships) and non-degree qualifications may be recognised against the AAQA Standard. For higher level programmes this refers to the same learning outcomes as AHEP. This briefing manual is specifically for accreditation of degrees against AHEP. Providers and awarding organisations seeking recognition of programmes against the AAQA should seek advice from the professional engineering institution(s) they would like to approve or accredit their programmes.

EAB accreditation visits

Applying for an EAB visit

Educational institutions seeking accreditation of degree programmes by three or more professional engineering institutions may submit an application to EAB for a joint accreditation visit. An important criterion is that there is sufficient commonality across the programmes. Educational institutions seeking accreditation by a single professional engineering institution or a joint visit between two professional engineering institutions should apply to the relevant professional engineering institution(s) directly.

The Engineering Council has introduced a risk-based approach to accreditation visits. This means that depending on the information provided in ACC1 and additional information requested prior to the visit, Professional Engineering Institutions will decide whether to carry out a virtual visit or an in-person visit to the educational institution.

Visits take place over two consecutive days (usually Tuesday and Wednesday or Wednesday and Thursday). EAB visits are held during term time and the available visit spaces get booked very quickly. Educational institutions are advised to:

1. Contact the EAB Secretariat and submit [EAB Form ACC1 Initial Data Form](#) ideally, at least 18 months in advance of when you would like a visit to be held providing three suggested visit dates, the names of the professional engineering institutions invited to participate, and the programme titles, if available.
2. Ensure there is enough time to plan and prepare for the visit, ahead of the current accreditation period ending (if applicable), to avoid breaks in accreditation.

Once the EAB accreditation visit dates have been confirmed, the EAB Secretariat will work with the educational institution, coordinating arrangements for the visit, including EAB Form ACC2 Submission for Accreditation and full submission due dates. Please refer to [Annex A](#) for information about what to include in the full submission. Please note that all information requested in advance of a visit needs to be shared electronically and the educational institution should make arrangements for this.

When completing the matrix, a learning outcome must only be indicated against a module where all students completing that module demonstrate learning against the learning outcome. Note that accreditation can only be awarded if it is demonstrated that all the required AHEP learning outcomes will be met by all students on a programme, regardless of module and project selections. Note also that the IET will only consider new programmes for accreditation where the first cohort is in their final year of the programme at the time of the visit. This does not include programmes which can be accredited via a Commonality Review. If you wish to clarify how this will affect your programmes, please contact IET directly via accreditation@theiet.org

Educational institutions are advised that following the submission of ACC2, the EAB Secretariat collates questions and requests for information from the members of the visit panel. The deadline for the notification of matters for which a response is required from the educational institution is one week before the visit. The educational institution should therefore expect to be contacted shortly thereafter with a view to provide responses either electronically or at the start of the visit.

The [EAB Visit Process Timeline](#) summarises the key activities associated with a visit and provides indicative timescales.

Review material to be provided in advance

The following information should also be provided electronically at least six weeks ahead of the visit:

Samples of student work - Samples of student work are requested in advance only where these are significant, ie representing 30% or more of the available marks for a module or the only element instrumental in meeting AHEP learning outcomes in a module

Major individual and group projects - For each programme, a minimum of six samples (or for the whole cohort if less than six) for both Individual and Group project reports, including three at the lowest scoring (threshold) pass with student names removed as necessary

Other modules - A copy of the module marks for the whole cohort (if this clearly shows the marks for each element in the module, then separate coursework and/or exam marks do not need to be provided as indicated below:

Coursework - Where a piece of coursework is significant (ie relates to 30% or more of the total marks available for a module or it is the only element instrumental in meeting AHEP learning outcomes in a module)

Exams - Where an examination is significant (ie relates to 30% or more of the total marks available for a module or it is the only element instrumental in meeting AHEP learning outcomes in a module)

Educational Institutions should be aware that the provision of evidence for future accreditation activities is a legitimate reason under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to retain assessed student work. HEIs may decide to seek permission from students and in some cases employers to retain work for the purposes of accreditation or approval. If such permission has not been sought (as opposed to refused) this should not prevent retention of information that may be required for the purpose of accreditation.

GDPR applies only to personal data – data that relates to an identified or identifiable individual – and does not apply to anonymised data. Educational Institutions may therefore decide to anonymise student work. If they do so, they must ensure that it will be obvious to accreditation or panel members which work goes with which mark sheet. Where information, anonymised or otherwise, is retained only for the purposes of accreditation, it would be appropriate to retain this information until all professional engineering institutions invited to consider accreditation have confirmed their final decision, in case information needs to be revisited or additional evidence reviewed before accreditation is confirmed.

Tour of facilities for virtual visits only- This should be a pre-recorded video tour of facilities relevant to the programmes for which accreditation is sought (with students present in the laboratories if possible) with commentary

Collaborative, franchised and international programmes

Where programmes are offered collaboratively, or on a franchised basis, professional engineering institutions will normally visit all partners involved in delivering the programme. Where a programme is delivered in more than one location (including internationally) educational institutions should either request accreditation visits to each site, or ensure that it is clear where accreditation is sought and applies (further information is in [AHEP 4.0](#))

If accreditation of programmes delivered outside the UK is sought, educational institutions are asked to submit an [EAB Form ACC1 Initial Data Form for International Visits](#) they may be asked to provide other additional information ahead of the visit, and may be asked to cover the full direct costs of the visit. Any request for an international EAB visit will be considered on a case by case basis.

Educational institutions are responsible for the accuracy of information they publish about the accreditation status of their programmes. Where a programme is not accredited for all delivery locations this must be clear in programme publicity, and it should be clear from degree certificates and/or transcripts (either by stating the delivery location or differentiation in titling) which graduates completed the accredited programme. If misleading information is published about the accreditation status of programmes offered by an educational institution or their partners, this may impact upon future accreditation decisions.

Charging

At present there is no charge for EAB visit Secretariat services, however charging for and the format of visits beyond 2023/24 academic year is currently being reviewed.

A number of professional engineering institutions also charge for accreditation visits. These charges vary from institution to institution and charging information can be provided on request, but may be subject to change at any time. The Engineering Council cannot accept responsibility for any unexpected charges or the rate of expenses where a PEI claims these back.

Cancellation of / amendments to a visit

The EAB Secretariat will advise the educational institution if any member of the visit panel is unable to take part in the visit due to unforeseen circumstances. It should be possible to continue with the visit and professional engineering institutions will endeavour to provide a substitute panel member in this instance, if possible.

In the event that the educational institution must cancel or reschedule a visit they should inform the EAB Secretariat as soon as possible. Any travel or subsistence costs already incurred by the visit panel must be reimbursed by the educational institution.

EAB standard visit schedules

The standard in-person visit schedule can be found [here](#) and a standard virtual visit schedule [here](#). It is not common to deviate from the schedule and any changes must be agreed by the visit panel chair via the EAB Secretariat. The EAB Secretariat will liaise with the educational institution and confirm the timetable prior to the visit.

The professional engineering institutions involved in the visit will decide whether it is necessary to hold an in-person visit or a virtual visit in line with the risk-based approach to accreditation.

At the visit

Room requirements for the in-person visit

It is expected that a base room be provided, large enough to accommodate the visit panel and review material, with sufficient power sockets/extension leads for panel members to plug in their laptops, and Wi-Fi (please note many panel members and the EAB Secretariat will not have access to eduroam). Ideally, the room should be set up in boardroom style with review materials located at the edge of the room. For security reasons, it is preferable that the room can be locked and that keys or passcodes are made available to the visit panel. Lunch should be served in or close to the base room and drinks (tea, coffee and water) available for panel members throughout the visit.

Additional rooms should also be made available near to the base room to allow the visit panel to split into smaller teams for the meetings with students, programme staff, and for private panel or discipline-specific sessions.

Technology for virtual visits

The EAB Secretariat will make arrangements for online hosting of meetings during virtual visits. This is likely to be via zoom but another platform such as Teams may be used in agreement between the Secretariat and PEIs.

The HEI must ensure that details of online meeting arrangements are shared with all university staff, students and industrial advisory board members who participate in the visit, and that people are made aware of the times when they should join the meeting.

Hybrid Meetings

Please make sure that it is possible for meetings during the EAB visit to be observed remotely, in case people cannot attend in person and the visit has to become hybrid.

Review material during the visit

The requirement for assessed student work to be submitted in advance of the visit removes the requirement for significant amounts of review material to be made available in the base room for the start of an in-person visit.

Educational providers may receive requests (in advance of or during the course of a visit) for additional material to be provided, particularly if there are any gaps in materials provided in advance.

Meeting with students

This is a very important and useful session for the panel members. The visit panel must have the opportunity to meet with students on different years of study and modes of learning (including

distance learning students where applicable), from each of the programmes where accreditation is sought. In particular, there should be students representing courses seeking accreditation by each of the PEIs involved in the visit. If the degree programmes have variations such as 'a year in industry' or a 'year abroad', it would be useful for panel members to meet students who have completed placements. Academic staff are not included in this meeting in order to ensure confidentiality between the students and visit panel. If some students (eg those studying via distance learning) prefer to attend the meeting virtually this will need to be agreed in advance of the visit.

Topics the panel may wish to cover include the following:

- Support for students
- Staff/student liaison committee
- Site visits
- Industrial visits/lectures
- Access to IT facilities
- Practical work
- Future prospects
- Membership of professional institutions
- Tutorials and access to teaching staff

If a visit is in-person it is expected that the meeting with students will be in-person.

Meeting with Industrial Advisory Board (IAB)

A meeting with the Industrial Advisory Board (or equivalent) should be arranged where possible. If the Department does not have an IAB (or equivalent) a meeting with industrialists who influence the programme(s) should be arranged. If some industrialists prefer to attend the meeting virtually this will need to be agreed in advance of an in-person visit and the Educational Provider will need to ensure that appropriate facilities are provided for virtual meetings.

Debriefing session

Particular aspects reviewed during the visit will be referred to at the debriefing session. Areas of good practice and those of non-conformity or concern that are likely to be included in the visit report may also be pointed out.

It is important to understand that the visit panel does not make the decision about accreditation; instead they make recommendations about accreditation to their respective accreditation committees who then make the final decision about accreditation.

There is no discussion following the debriefing session. Further clarification will be provided when the visit report and action plan are sent to the educational institution for factual correction.

Monitoring visits

One or more professional engineering institutions may request a monitoring visit if they are not satisfied that all the learning outcomes can be assessed during the initial full visit and/or less than five years accreditation has been awarded. A monitoring visit will typically take place one or two

years after the full visit and be shorter in length with fewer panel members. In some cases, monitoring may be electronic- or paper-based without an actual visit, for example if evidence of student work is required. HEIs will usually need to liaise directly with professional engineering institutions to arrange any monitoring activity.

Important note regarding action plans

An action plan will need to be completed by the educational institution and will accompany the draft visit report (to be checked for factual accuracy). The plan will cover all requirements and recommendations, as agreed by the visiting panel and will need to be completed and returned to the EAB Secretariat along with the draft visit report in line with the [EAB Visit Concordat](#). The action plan will be considered alongside the visit report by the professional engineering institution accreditation committees.

Professional engineering institution accreditation committees may accept a visit report but defer awarding accreditation if they require a revised action plan to be submitted. In order to ensure that the action plan is approved in a timely manner, educational institutions should:

- respond to each requirement and recommendation in the plan individually
- provide dates and names of individuals assigned to each action
- include dates which are timely and realistic
- commit to action
- use the plan to negotiate with central educational institution functions if necessary
- include appropriate evidence, eg revised aims and objectives.

Action plans may form part of an ongoing dialogue with professional engineering institutions and will be checked at the next accreditation visit or review.

Feedback after an EAB visit

Feedback is very important to EAB. The EAB feedback form will be provided to the educational institution. EAB encourages institutions to complete the form and to provide suggestions about where and how the visit process could be improved.

Appeals procedure

EAB does not have a common appeals procedure following an EAB accreditation visit. Each professional engineering institution is solely responsible for the decision to accredit or not and therefore any appeal is through the relevant institution's appeals process.

Appeals are rare and universities may submit, in writing to the institution(s) concerned, a request for a review of an accreditation decision on the following grounds:

- there is evidence of administrative, procedural or other irregularities in the conduct of the accreditation visit or other aspects of the accreditation processes

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- information has become available which would influence the decision and which was not, and could not have been, available at the time of the accreditation or review visit.

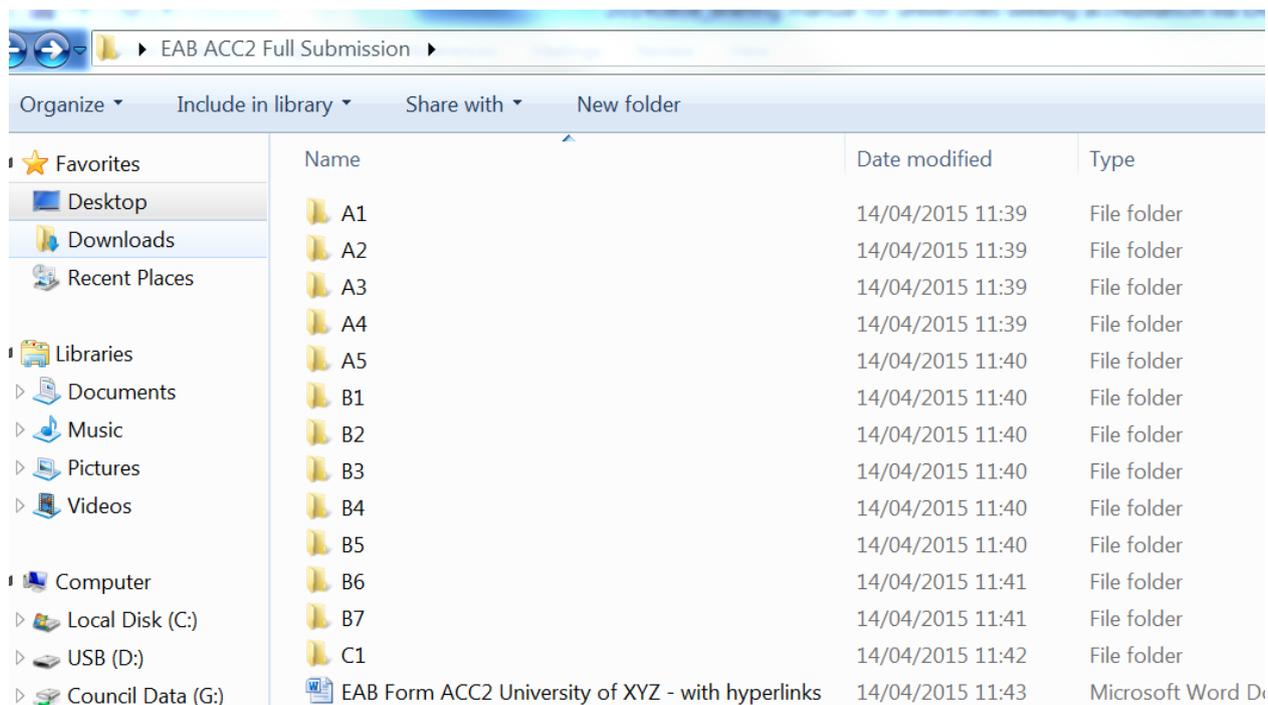
Please refer to the relevant professional engineering institution's website for their appeal procedures.

Frequently asked questions

The Engineering Council website provides answers to [Frequently asked questions](#)

Annex A – Submission file structure

The online file sharing system should be organised as below. Each section should be presented in a separate folder, with the main submission (ACC2) in its own folder, if possible with hyperlinks to the other folders. If you wish to use an alternative online system, the university is responsible for providing the usernames and access to the system (please note, not all panel members will have access to eduroam).



The screenshot shows a Windows File Explorer window titled 'EAB ACC2 Full Submission'. The left sidebar shows the navigation pane with 'Favorites' and 'Libraries' expanded. The main pane displays a list of folders and files:

Name	Date modified	Type
A1	14/04/2015 11:39	File folder
A2	14/04/2015 11:39	File folder
A3	14/04/2015 11:39	File folder
A4	14/04/2015 11:39	File folder
A5	14/04/2015 11:40	File folder
B1	14/04/2015 11:40	File folder
B2	14/04/2015 11:40	File folder
B3	14/04/2015 11:40	File folder
B4	14/04/2015 11:40	File folder
B5	14/04/2015 11:40	File folder
B6	14/04/2015 11:41	File folder
B7	14/04/2015 11:41	File folder
C1	14/04/2015 11:42	File folder
EAB Form ACC2 University of XYZ - with hyperlinks	14/04/2015 11:43	Microsoft Word Document

Section A

A1 should contain Programme Specifications, External Examiners Reports and Programme Learning Outcomes.

A2 should contain the most recent TEF, Internal Programme Review Reports / Self-Assessment Reports, and graduate destinations data.

A3 should contain a folder with development policies for all staff development and training.

A4 should contain information about resources: facilities and student experience.

A5 should contain information about major changes planned or intended such as changes to programmes, facilities, etc.

Section B

B1 should contain separate folders for the following:

- Programme Structure
- Syllabuses/Module Descriptors
- Examination Papers

B2 should contain separate folders with information about projects, including project lists, details of any confidentiality agreements that may impact upon availability of projects to review, information about selection and allocation of projects, assessment of projects including marking criteria, implications if students fail a project and project guidance such as relevant handbooks.

B3 should contain information as specified under Industrial Input and Influence, including industrial and research inputs to programme review and development, details of Industrial Advisory Board, visiting lecturers, opportunities for students to gain industrial experience, and industrial visits.

B4 should contain information about any partnership or franchise arrangements and / or non-UK study.

B5 should contain information pertaining to Admissions, Award and Destination, including Programme details, Entry requirements, Cohort Support Methods of Assessment, Progression, Exit awards, Degree Classification and Graduation statistics.

B6 should contain information regarding Professional Membership and the promotion of accreditation.

B7 should contain any examples of innovative features.

Section C

C1 should contain the Output Standards Matrix.

Section D

Use the checklist in D1 to ensure all required documentation is on the USB memory stick or in file share.

Section E

Section E should contain additional information required for a visit

Section F

Section F should contain additional institution specific information for a visit

Section G

Section G should contain additional information required at least six weeks in advance of a visit.

Section H

Section H relates to the provision of a pre-recorded tour where the visit is conducted virtually only.

For further information detailing what should be included under each of the above headings and folders please refer to EAB Form ACC2 Submission for Accreditation.