

**EAB**

**Engineering Accreditation Board**

**Briefing Manual for  
Universities Seeking  
Accreditation  
via EAB**

**January 2011**

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### Aim of the Manual

This manual is for universities (HEIs) seeking joint accreditation of academic programmes for both Incorporated (IEng) and Chartered (CEng) Engineer Status via the Engineering Accreditation Board (EAB). It is intended to assist you in preparing for an EAB visit. A joint accreditation visit involving several professional engineering bodies is suitable where there is sufficient commonality amongst the programmes put forward. In brief, those HEIs opting for an EAB visit will have one point of contact through the EAB Secretariat, complete only one set of submission documentation and receive a single visit to assess the programmes. The HEI will therefore receive only one visit report after the visit.

All 21 of the Professional Engineering Institutions (PEIs) that are licensed by the Engineering Council to accredit academic programmes are members of EAB, and the Engineering Council provides the Secretariat.

The information and many of the documents in the manual are available on the EAB website. <http://www.engab.org.uk/eab-visits.aspx>

### Why seek Accreditation?

Accreditation is essentially a peer review process and applies to individual engineering degree programmes. An engineering degree that is accredited is a marketable advantage for the university 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 qualified engineer.

An accredited degree has a mark of quality recognised by employers in the United Kingdom. Internationally it demonstrates equivalent provision and therefore supports the needs of the engineering graduates on an international market place.

The accreditation process should be a partnership between the PEIs and the HEIs. The EAB strongly supports a continuing dialogue between the HEIs and the PEIs 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 in a handbook, the Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes:

<http://www.engab.org.uk/media/45601/ahep%20brochure.pdf>

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

### Which courses can be accredited?

All degrees including HNDs, Bachelors, Bachelors with Honours, MEng and MScs can be accredited. PEIs will also consider requests to accredit Foundation Degrees as partially meeting the requirements for IEng registration. A statement about the accreditation of Foundation Degrees is available on:

<http://www.engc.org.uk/ecukdocuments/internet/document%20library/Statement%20about%20the%20accreditation%20of%20Foundation%20Degrees.pdf>

The period of accreditation is typically five years, counted from the first-year student intake date.

### Accredited Courses

The Engineering Council holds details of academic qualifications that partially or fully satisfy the education requirement for IEng and CEng registration. There are currently over 4000 courses on the searchable Engineering Council Accredited Courses Database:

<http://www.engc.org.uk/acadsearch>

All courses listed on the database are accredited by entry year to the first year of the course, except where otherwise stated. Once accreditation is granted by an institution, this information will be submitted to the Engineering Council and will be publicly available.

### Dual Accreditation

All Honours degrees accredited for CEng registration from intake year 1999 meet the requirements for standard route IEng registration and Sydney Accord recognition.

### EUR-ACE LABEL

In the UK the Engineering Council is able to award the EUR-ACE Label to first and second cycle engineering degrees that meet the required standard. Degree courses accredited by a licensed PEI since 2006 automatically meet the EUR-ACE standard and are eligible to be considered.

For more information: <http://www.engc.org.uk/education--skills/accreditation/european-accreditation.aspx>.

Further information is available from: [international@engc.org.uk](mailto:international@engc.org.uk)

### The Standard (UK-SPEC)

The UK-SPEC (United Kingdom Standard for Professional Engineering Competence) (<http://www.engc.org.uk/ecukdocuments/internet/document%20library/UK-SPEC.pdf>) explains the requirements that have to be met for registration, and gives examples of ways of doing this. UK-SPEC was implemented in 2004 and signalled a shift to the focus being on learning outcomes. All accredited degrees are assessed against criteria set out in the Engineering Council's 'The Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes' booklet (<http://www.engc.org.uk/ecukdocuments/internet/document%20library/AHEP%20Brochure.pdf>).

The standards of professional competence are detailed in the Engineering Council's UK-SPEC.

### EAB Visits

#### Applying for an EAB visit

Any HEI seeking accreditation of a number of programmes by two or more (PEIs) may submit an application to EAB. An important criterion is that there is sufficient commonality within the programmes. HEIs seeking accreditation by a single PEI should apply to the relevant institution directly.

Visits are usually planned 6 – 12 months in advance and as EAB visits take place in term time, the available visit slots get fully booked very quickly. HEIs are advised to contact the EAB Secretariat as soon as possible to ensure that a visit can take place at a time convenient to the University and visiting Panels, and that is in advance of the accreditation expiry date.

Accreditation steps:

1. Complete Initial Data Form ([ACC1](#)) and prepare a CD of programme specifications.
2. Return these to the EAB Secretariat, submitting multiple copies of the form and accompanying CD, one for each PEI that you are inviting as well as a copy for the Secretariat.
3. ACC1 and CD will be forwarded to the PEIs specified in the ACC1 form.
4. University is notified of response from PEIs, usually in about 3 – 4 weeks.
5. EAB Secretariat will email the full submission documents (ACC2).
6. The documentation is required to be with the EAB Secretariat at least **eight weeks** before the visit is due to take place, and ideally sooner.

### Other Important information for HEIs

#### Review Visits

Review visits may be requested by the visiting panel if the panel is not satisfied that all the Learning Outcomes can be assessed during the current visit and/or less than five years accreditation has been awarded. Usually a review visit may be requested one or two years after the full visits and are shorter with a smaller number of Panel Members.

### **Cancellation of a visit/Amendments**

The EAB Secretariat will advise the University if one of the visiting team/PEIs is no longer able to take part in the scheduled visit due to unforeseen circumstances.

Where there is a joint visit with a number of institutions taking part, it should be possible to continue with the visit.

### **Meeting with the students**

This is a very important and useful session for the panel members. Academic staff are not included in this meeting in order to ensure confidentiality between the students and visiting panel.

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

### **Review of evidence**

Panel members will wish to see evidence of the delivery and assessment of the learning outcomes. This includes past examination papers, project work, marking schemes, external examiners reports and samples of continuously assessed work.

### **Feedback from panel at the end of the visit**

During the debriefing session, particular aspects looked at during the visit will be referred to, and areas of good practice and areas of non-conformity or concern that are likely to be included in the visit report are mentioned.

It is important to understand that the panel members do not make the decision about accreditation. They will be making recommendations about accreditation to their individual accreditation committees, with whom the final decisions on accreditation rest. Therefore the university can expect the feedback from the panel normally to outline the recommendations that panel members will be making to their committees, and an indication of possible accreditation decisions.

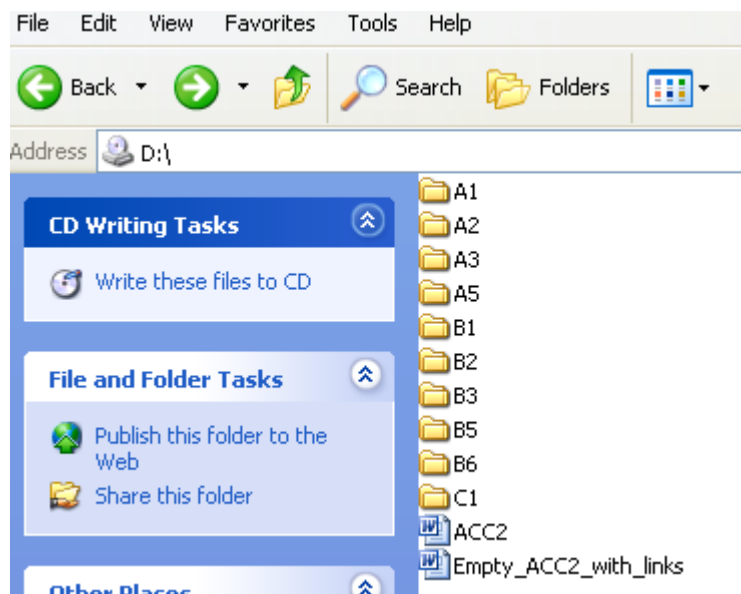
The Chair will remind the university about the reporting timescales. Individual institution committees tend to meet three or four times a year. If the University is asked to produce an action plan to address areas of concern or non-conformity, it is important to provide sufficient and relevant detail, and within the time-scale specified, in order to prevent any un-necessary delay in the process.

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

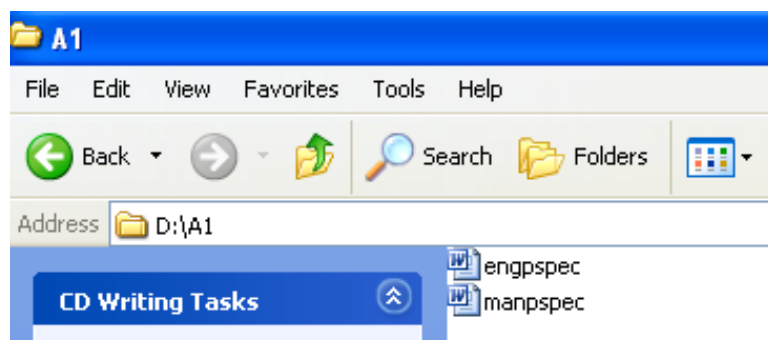
### CD

#### CD File Structure

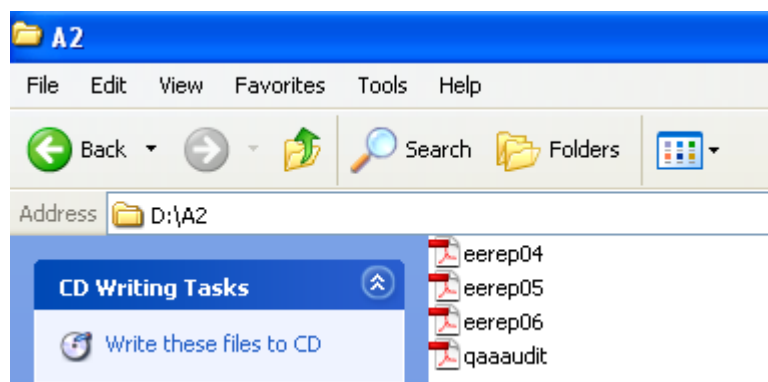
It would be helpful if the CD can be arranged in the following way:



A1 should contain Programme Specifications and External Examiners Reports

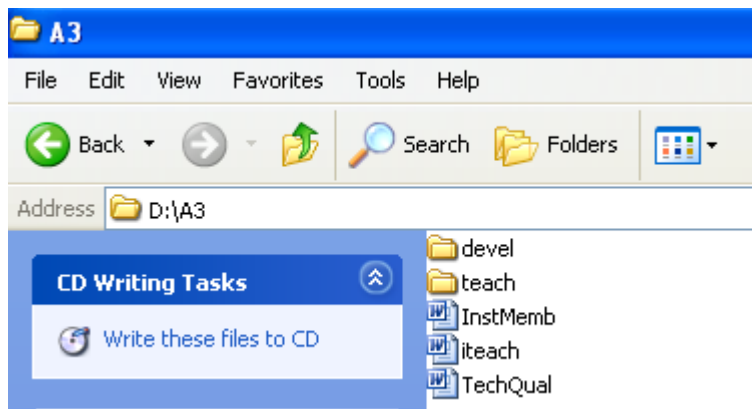


A2 should contain Internal Review Self-Assessment Reports

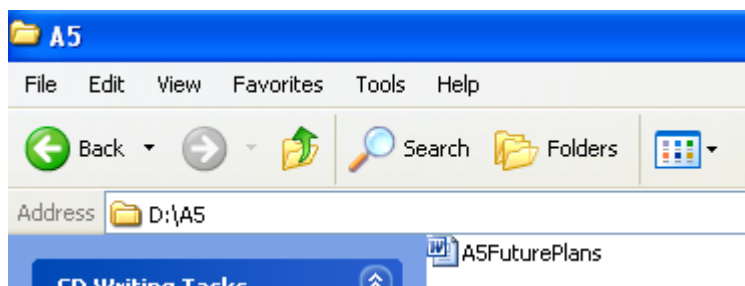


A3 should contain separate folders containing the below:

- Teaching staff 's CVs
- Qualifications of the technical support staff
- Development policies for all staff



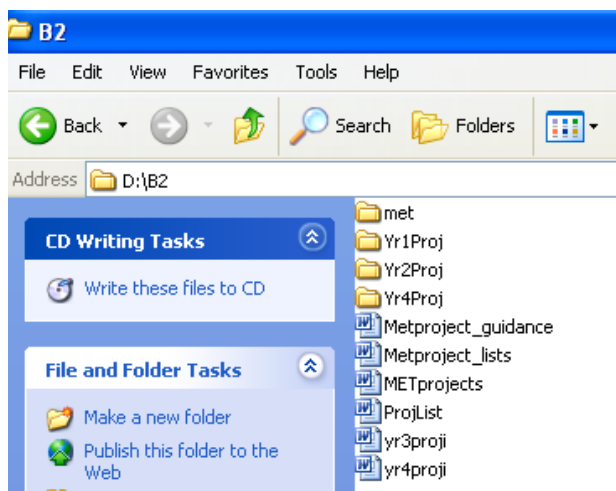
A5 should contain major changes planned or intended such as changes to programmes, facilities etc.



B1 should contain separate folders for the following:

- Programme Structure
- Syllabuses/Module Descriptors
- Examination Papers

B2 should contain separate folders with the various projects and relevant handbooks



B5 should contain Graduation Statistics and Methods of Assessment

C1 should contain the Output Standards Matrix

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

Checklist:

Reference	Description	Included?	Notes
A1.3	Programme Specifications		
A1.4	External Examiners Reports		
A1.5	Programme Learning Outcomes Matrix		
A2.1	QAA Institutional Audit Review		
A2.2	Internal Review Self-Assessment Reports		
A3.2	Staff Development & Training		
A5.1	Planned Changes		
B1.1	Programme Structure		
B1.2	Syllabuses/Module Descriptors		
B1.3	Examination Papers		
B2.1	Project List		
B2.3	Project Guidance		
B3.1	Industrial Advisory Board Minutes		
B5.4	EAB/ACC2/A: Graduation Statistics		
B5.5	EAB/ACC2/B: Methods of Assessment		
C1.2	EAB/ACC2/C: Output Standards Matrix		

### Standard Visit Schedule

The EAB Secretariat will be your main point of contact when arranging an EAB visit and in the case of any queries. Should any PEI-specific issues arise, the Secretariat will refer this to the relevant PEI.

The EAB Secretariat will forward the full submission documentation to the visiting panel members who will review the documentation and inform the Secretariat if they require any further information. A copy will also be sent to the individual institutions concerned for information.

The EAB Secretariat will also liaise with the University regarding the arrangements for the day and send a timetable (standard visit schedule) a few weeks prior to the visit.

### Standard Visit Schedule for panel members

#### Day 1

#### 11:00 – 13:00 **Materials available for review**

Access to the Materials Room will be made available from 10.30 to allow panel members to review the material.

The university will be asked to provide examples of individual and group project work, project marking lists, course work and tutorial work sheets. A full set of the submission documentation and access to a computer terminal will also be available.

#### 13:00 – 13:30 **Lunch for panel members (base room)**

13.30 – 14.00 **Chairman's Introduction/Overview of visit/Agree timings for the afternoon**

14:00 – 14:30 **Welcome & Introduction to Key Staff**

This will include a brief presentation by the Head of Department, giving an overview of the department (10 mins approx). Key staff from the Department will be present and the Vice Chancellor, if available, will also attend.

14:30 – 16:00 **Panel Meeting/Discipline Specific Meetings (times to be agreed during Chairman's introduction)**

Discipline Specific Meetings are to exchange views and to prepare a list of issues to be discussed in the full panel meeting.

Panel Meetings are to exchange views and to prepare a list of common and specialist issues to be discussed later with the Department.

16:00 – 17:00 **Private Meeting with Students**

17:00 – 18:00 **Meeting with the Industrial Liaison Committee**

18:00 **Private Panel Meeting**

Feedback from the meetings with students and Industrial Liaison Committee, discussion of material reviewed.

EAB Secretary and Panel chair to draw up list of common and specialist issues and reports issues to the Head of Department

18:45 **Panel departs for hotel**

### **Day Two**

9:00 – 9:30 **Private Panel meeting**

Continue review of materials

09:30 - 10:30 **Tour of facilities**

To include laboratories, workshops, computer facilities and library. The EAB team may split into groups to visit separate areas of the facilities.

10.30 – 11.30 **Discussion with Head of School and senior staff**

Discussion of generic/strategic issues (such as resources, QA etc.).

11:30 – 13.00 **Meeting with programme staff**

To discuss common and Institution-specific matters and where the UK-SPEC outcomes are being met in the programmes

13:00 - 13:30 **Private Panel Working Lunch**

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To discuss findings from morning's meetings

### 13:30 - 14:30 **Private Panel discipline-specific meetings**

To discuss findings and to produce a list of discipline-specific matters to be discussed in the full panel meeting and included in the report. University staff will be asked to be available if required for panel members to consult.

### 14:30 – 15:45 **Private Panel Meeting and Review of Material**

Further review of documentation, if required, and to discuss findings and draft report. University staff will be asked to be available if required for panel members to consult.

### 15:45 - 16:00 **Debriefing Session with EAB Panel and Staff**

The debriefing session is not intended to reflect any recommendations on accreditation. It is used to highlight aspects examined during the visit and will usually highlight any areas of good practice and areas of concern that are likely to be included in the visit report. There is no discussion following the debriefing session. The HEI will be informed that the panel cannot give any formal feedback as accreditation decisions are made by the individual PEIs, and further clarification will be provided to the University when the visit report and action plan is sent to the University for factual correction.

### 16:00 **EAB Team departs**

## Charging

A number of PEIs currently charge for accreditation visits. These charges vary from institution to institution and are usually per department. HEIs should either contact the EAB Secretariat or the PEI for more information on charging. The Engineering Council statement on charging is available on <http://www.engab.org.uk/media/55054/100701PublishedStatementMarch%202010.pdf>

### What to Expect and When

#### EAB visit concordat

ACTIVITY	TIMESCALE
Visit report / action plan prepared by EAB Secretariat and sent to panel chair and panel members for comment	Up to 2 weeks
Panel chair and panel members return report / action plan, with comments	2 weeks
Secretariat amends report / action plan and sends to university for factual correction of report / completion of action plan	Up to 1 week
University returns report / action plan	3 – 4 weeks
Secretariat sends final report / completed action plan to Institution staff for consideration of accreditation committees	Up to 1 week
<b>Total time</b>	<b>6 – 10 weeks</b>

Institution accreditation committees normally meet every quarter and the EAB secretariat will inform the university as to when they are likely to be considered. Due to the varied times at which they meet, it is likely that the final decision letter will be issued several months later. However it should be possible to provide the university with informal feedback in the meantime, as and when the Institutions confirm their recommendations regarding accreditation.

#### Important Note re Action Plans

Visit panels often request that action plans are completed by universities seeking accreditation to deal with any changes that are required or recommendations that are made. They should be submitted 3 to 4 weeks after the visit report has been made available and will be considered alongside the visit report by the various PEI committees.

PEI Committees sometimes accept a visit report but defer accreditation until a revised action plan is submitted. In order to ensure that your action plan is approved in a timely manner, please:

- respond to each requirement and recommendation in the report
- have dates and people assigned to each action
- include dates which are timely but realistic
- commit to action and not to reviews where possible
- use the plan to negotiate with central University functions if necessary
- attach appropriate evidence e.g. revised aims and objectives

Action Plans may form part of an ongoing dialogue with PEIs and will normally be checked at the next accreditation review point.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### [How can I find out the detailed requirements and specifications that must be met for the accreditation of an undergraduate or postgraduate engineering degree to be awarded?](#)

Under UK-SPEC, the decision to accredit a programme is made on the basis that it delivers a series of specified learning outcomes. The Engineering Council publication Accreditation of HE Programmes gives details of the generic output standards for accredited programmes required by UK-SPEC. The EAB Submission for Accreditation (Form ACC2) shows all the information that is required on an accreditation visit.

#### [I am interested in getting the programmes at my University accredited by more than one Professional Engineering Institution – what are my options for arranging the visit\(s\)?](#)

You have three options. Firstly, you can apply for an EAB visit, which allows you to invite several Institutions on a joint visit. You have a single point of contact through the EAB secretariat and complete one set of submission documentation. For further information on EAB visits, click [here](#). Secondly, you can contact the Institutions directly to request a joint visit. Normally one of the Institutions would take the lead in arranging such a visit. Or thirdly, you can contact the Institutions to arrange separate visits to look at your programmes. Contact details for the Institutions can be found [here](#).

#### [I am interested in applying for an EAB visit, but the accreditation of the various programmes at my University runs out at different times – how should I proceed?](#)

You can still apply for an EAB visit, but you should contact the Institution(s) whose accreditation runs out before the planned visit to seek advice on the best way forward. It might be possible for the Institution(s) to extend accreditation for a short period (sometimes following a paper review) or for the Institution(s) to look at backdating the accreditation at a subsequent visit.

#### [When do EAB visits take place?](#)

Most EAB visits take place between October and May. Visits are normally two days in length and take place mid-week. Visits are scheduled during term time because the visiting panel will need to meet with students on the programmes being looked at. EAB visits can also take place outside these months if students are available.

#### [How many members of the visiting panel should I expect on an EAB visit?](#)

Each Institution on an EAB visit will normally send two or three panel representatives and there will also be one or two staff members from PEIs in attendance

#### [How long after an EAB visit will I find out the Institutions' decisions regarding accreditation?](#)

A visit report and action plan will be produced after the visit, normally within 6 weeks. You will be asked to check the factual accuracy of the visit report and complete the action plan (usually within 3 – 4 weeks). Your response will be sent to the Institutions for consideration by their committees. A final decision letter will be issued once all of the Institutions have made a decision on accreditation. Due to the varied times at which their committees meet, this will take several months. However, wherever possible, the EAB secretariat will provide informal feedback on any decisions made in the interim. The visit concordat is attached on page 10.

### [How do I find the Engineering Council reference for my programmes, as required on the Initial Data Form?](#)

If the programme has previously been accredited (even if the accreditation has lapsed) then you can find the Engineering Council reference by searching the [Accredited Courses Database](#). The Engineering Council reference is the 3 or 4 digit number given underneath the programme title. If the programme has not previously been accredited, then it should be described as 'New' on the Form.

### [How do I search for a particular programme on the Engineering Council Accredited Courses Database?](#)

You can search the database at: <http://www.engc.org.uk/education--skills/accreditation/accredited-course-search.aspx>. Enter the programme title in the *Keywords* field. The system will automatically search for full time programmes in the UK so you may need to alter the *Location* and *Type* fields as appropriate. When you click *Search*, a list of all the universities with programmes that match your search criteria will be displayed. You can view the records (and find the Engineering Council reference) by clicking on the appropriate university name.

## FEEDBACK FROM UNIVERSITY

Feedback is very important to the EAB and individual institutions. This EAB feedback form will be sent to the HEI before the visit with a return date of two weeks after the visit. HEIs are encouraged to complete it and return it comments. Any comments on how the process could be improved would also be very welcome.

## Appeals Procedure

The EAB does not have a common appeal procedure following an EAB accreditation visit. Each 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 a written request to the individual institution for a review of an accreditation decision on the following grounds:

That there is evidence of administrative, procedural or other irregularities in the conduct of the accreditation or review visit,

That 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 institutions website for their appeal procedures.

**THE END**