



The Institution of
Engineering and Technology



IET Accreditor Handbook



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Introduction

What is Accreditation?

Accreditation is a process whereby a programme is assessed to confirm whether graduating students would meet the educational requirements for Incorporated Engineer (IEng) or Chartered Engineer (CEng) registration.

These requirements are set out by the Engineering Council in [Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes \(AHEP\)](#).

There are also further IET requirements and guidelines for accreditation and these can be found in the [Information Pack](#) available on the IET website

The table below illustrates the level of accreditation that is awarded against certain types of programme.

Level of fulfilment	Programme Type
Full CEng	Integrated Master's programme (e.g. MEng, MSci)
Partial CEng	Bachelor's programmes (e.g. BEng(Hons), BSc(Hons))
Partial CEng (Further Learning)	Master's Degree other than Integrated Master's
Full IEng	Bachelor's programmes (e.g. BEng and BEng(Hons), BSc and BSc(Hons))
Partial IEng	Foundation Degrees
Partial IEng (Further Learning)	Final year 'top-up' bachelor programmes

Note: The academic study component of Degree and Graduate Apprenticeships (DAs and GAs) can also be assessed under AHEP and are usually Bachelors degrees, however DAs and GAs can be at any level. More information on these types of programme can be found here:

[IET DA and GA statement](#)



Code of Conduct and Expectations

As an IET Volunteer you are expected to:

- Comply and keep up to date with the mandatory IET policies, training and Code of Conduct. This is coordinated centrally by the simple to use e-learning environment called 'InfoAware'.

If you have any queries about this or have not been contacted within 3 months of starting your Accreditor role you can contact them directly via volunteer@theiet.org

- Be mindful of the IET's travel policy to obtain the best value possible for travel making use of low-cost carriers/ advanced bookings/ rail cards when appropriate.

As an Academic Accreditor you are expected to:

Engage in discussions and decision making before, during and after an accreditation review or visit.

- Review all online academic accreditation training materials annually.
- Be familiar with AHEP and the IET's Information Pack.
- Participate in at least 1 accreditation visit per year (2 accreditation visits as a trainee accreditor).
- Attend the Annual Accreditor Conference/ Training event.
- Keep evidence supplied in support of an application for accreditation confidential.

- To adhere to equality, diversity and inclusion legislation and display inclusive behaviours.
- Be mindful of potential conflicts of interest before agreeing to participate in an accreditation activity (see 'Conflict of Interest' for more detail)

During Accreditation Activities:

- Engage with all parts of the process (pre-visit/ review, on-visit/ review and post-visit/ review tasks).

Pre-visit / review

- Be prepared by reading the submission in advance being mindful of the task deadlines.
- Contribute to the go-no-go decision for Accreditation Visits (see 'Go-no-go decision' for more details)
- Contribute to the discussion topics before the visit.
- Inform the IET and Visit Chair of any conflicting deadlines, holidays, other commitments that may affect your engagement in the process.

On-visit/ review:

- Operate in a spirit of partnership with the organisation seeking accreditation.
- Identify areas of good practice and innovation
- Ensure your findings and lines of enquiry are evidence based and grounded in meeting AHEP learning outcomes or alignment with IET requirements and guidelines.
- Feel free to give advice but avoid imposing or discussing what your own institution does.
- Communicate shortfalls against the accreditation criteria directly but constructively during the visit and in the visit report.
- To keep to the agreed timetable
- To deal with intra-panel disagreements privately and respectfully via the Visit Panel Chair
- Keep to the agreed timetable (try to avoid booking travel that means you either arrive late or need to leave before the end).

Post-visit

- Respond to draft of the visit report in a timely manner.
- Contribute to the review/ acceptance of the action plan.
- You may also be asked to be involved with some other activity types, such as Initial reviews, Advisory Visits and Monitoring activities etc. All other activities are described in this document.

Important note: If you are unable to act as a panel member on an accreditation visit for 3 years, you will be expected to complete the training programme again to ensure you are up to date with current practice.

Conflict of Interest

The Engineering Council Registration Code of Practice states that ‘reasonable steps must be taken to avoid ‘conflicts of interest’ in the composition of accreditation panels.

The following guidance has been developed by the IET to assist accreditation volunteers and staff.

You should not normally take part in a particular accreditation activity if any of the following apply:

- Current employee, including a visiting lecturer or industrial advisor position or have been employed by them in the last 5 years.
- You have applied for a job at the university within the past two years.
- A close family member currently works for or is currently studying the programmes being reviewed at the HEI.
- Current or past External Examiner up to 3 years or if your report likely be in the submission at the time of the visit.
- You have a current research collaboration or business interest with the HEI.
- You have been a member of the Industrial Advisory Board (or equivalent) in the past three years.
- Involved in or advised on the design of the programme as a consultant (whether paid or voluntary).
- Employed by a rival institution.
- In some cases the university may ask for re-assignment of panel if they perceive a conflict of interest. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Note: If you need to be re-assigned for any of the above reasons it is both in the interest of the IET process and to safeguard you as an individual from any potential appeal or complaint, it is not concerning your personal or professional integrity.



Industrial Accreditors

The accreditation process encourages industry input and influence in programme design and student experience. It is expected that an accredited degree teaches a professional approach to engineering and must be informed by current industrial practice.

If you are the Industrial representative on the panel you will bring the perspective of industry and will be able to offer your knowledge and experience from your sector, relating to many aspects of the Accreditation Criteria and AHEP.

Areas of interest for you may be (but not limited to):

IET Criteria items:

- *Industrial involvement:* including, evidence of industrial input and influence on programme design, including the maintenance of links with industry and other relevant external stakeholders.
- *AHEP Learning outcomes:* that concern industry and societal challenges, industry standards, professional code of conduct, managing and mitigating risk, Security, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, commercial context, teamwork, CPD.
- *Projects:* including, Project selection and allocation, Project planning and management, Standard and appropriateness
- *Student support and staffing:* including, Industrial involvement in the student learning experience

including lectures, visits, sponsorship and training, and support for industrial placement. IET student awareness of professional registration and membership of PEIs. Support for development of employability of students. Staff recruitment, development, and training. Subject expertise of academic staff. Staff professional registration and membership of professional bodies

- *Resources and facilities:* Provision of general and specialist laboratory computing facilities. Planned expenditure (capital and revenue). IT security.

The Panel Chair may also ask you to Chair the meeting with Industrialists on an Accreditation Visit. We have prepared some suggested questions for this meeting to help with this, available in ADAMS.

Note: The Academic Accreditation Committee always contains industrialist members and many of our academic members also have industrial experience.



Expenses

IET staff will book accommodation for all IET Academic Accreditation activities; this will include visits meetings etc. We will also book and manage flights for international accreditation visits.

As volunteers you will be expected to book your own transport.

The full Volunteers expense policy can be found in the IET Volunteering section of EngX, along with Travel Insurance guidance, Expenses Claim for, Vehicle Insurance guidance and how to claim you Volunteering expenses.

[IET EngX \(theiet.org\)](https://theiet.org)



AHEP

What is AHEP?

UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC) sets out the competence and commitment required for registration as an Engineering Technician (EngTech), Incorporated Engineer (IEng) or Chartered Engineer (CEng)

Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes (AHEP) sets out the standards for degree accreditation (expressed through Learning Outcomes).

AHEP 4 was published on 31 August 2020. Although institutions can currently choose whether to be assessed against either the 3rd or 4th editions, those starting to prepare for their next accreditation or advisory visit are strongly advised to choose AHEP4.

All accredited programmes are expected to align with AHEP 4 by 31 August 2024.

AHEP 4th Edition

Full details of AHEP 4 can be found within the online training materials. Please email accreditation@theiet.org to request access to this.

Output standards defined for the same types of programmes as AHEP 3 plus Bachelors 'top-up' programmes. In addition some principles and reference to Degree Apprenticeships.

There are 18 learning outcomes (LOs) in AHEP4 for both IEng and CEng accreditation

These are classified under five areas of learning:

- Science and Mathematics (1)
- Engineering Analysis (3)
- Design and Innovation (2)
- The Engineer and Society (5)
- Engineering Practice (7)

These LOs form an orthogonal set – same headings for IEng and CEng.

There are always 18 LOs except that some of the 18 are expected to have been “achieved at previous level of study” in further-learning and top-up degrees.

AHEP3 had between 23 and 42 LOs, so, at first sight, AHEP4 appears much more straightforward.

The main differences for AHEP 4 learning outcomes compared to AHEP 3 are as follows:

- Greater emphasis on the higher-level cognitive processes to **evaluate** and to **create**.
- **Different emphasis on or new LOs:-**
 - Integrated *systems* approach
 - Minimisation of environmental and societal impact
 - Ethical choices made
 - Risk management processes and mitigation
 - Security - in terms of departmental operations and its applications to Engineering (new)

- Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion - in terms of departmental operations and its applications to Engineering (new)
- Quality management systems
- Two-way communication skills
- Lifelong learning / CPD

The full AHEP 4 framework can be found on our website:

<https://www.theiet.org/career/accreditation/academic-accreditation/policy-and-guidance/>



Accreditation visits

Overview

This is the main activity you will be asked to conduct as an Academic Accreditor. This will be for Departments whose programmes are due for reaccreditation and/or new programmes with no or limited commonality with other accredited programmes and/or previously unaccredited programmes. The schedule of Accreditation Visits is sent out to all Accreditors over the Summer months and panel allocations are based on subject expertise.

Number of Accreditors:

3 Academics and 1 Industrialist, plus IET Staff. There may also be up to 2 trainees.

Time Allocation:

1 -2 days for submission review, 2 days visit (normally), 1 day post visit. **Total 4-5 days**

Accreditor Tasks:

1. Go-no-go decision
2. Produce discussion topics
3. Carry out Visit
4. Contribute to draft visit report
5. Review Action Plan response
6. Present to AAC (Chair)

What to expect:

The Chair will coordinate the panel's tasks pre-visit, this may be based on subject expertise and/ or by section of the submission.

On the visit you will have meetings with staff, students and industry links and have a tour of the facilities.

During the later part of the visit the panel produces the first draft of the report and determine any requirements and recommendations. This is fed back to the HEI at the end of visit.

Following the visit all panel members are expected to contribute to finalising the report and the subsequent review of the Action Plan.

Panel Roles

Panel Chair

- Coordinates submission review and generation of discussion topics before visit
- Spokesperson for the panel
- Chairs the panel and university staff meetings on the visit
- Ensures all panel members have had the opportunity to put forward their judgments
- Writes the visit report
- Presents visit report and completed action plan to AAC

Panel Members (and trainee accreditors)

- Represents the IET and the Professionally Registered engineering community
- Gathers evidence in order to make an objective judgement and to help form a consensus view.
- Presents judgements in a measured and constructive way
- Contributes to tasks, before during and after the visit

IET Staff Responsibilities

- Logistics and administration before, during and after visits
- Ensure the panel is provided with all the information to prepare for the visit
- Point of communication between the panel and the department
- Provide advice as required during normal office hours

Submission

The submission for the main visit is substantial and the largest of any activity type. It will include:

Modules:

- | | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| - Descriptors | - Learning Outcomes | - Assessment Examples | - Marks |
| - Project management | | | |

Programmes:

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| - Programme Specifications | - Programme Structure | - Validation docs | - AHEP Mapping |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|

Supporting Information

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------|------------|
| - Industrial Influence | - Admissions (including Entry and Progression) | - Assessment Policy | - Staffing |
| - Resources and facilities | - Quality Assurance | - Action Plan | - Overview |

Tips for the submission review:

- Take a 'top-down' approach (more on this later)
- Sample the assessments and student work.
- Allow yourself a couple of hours at the go-no-go stage and 1 day for the full review

The 'Go-No-Go'

All Panel members are expected to contribute to this decision, it should not be the sole responsibility of the Panel Chair.

For a 'go' decision a submission must show the following:

- No substantial items are missing. ADAMS will check for completeness, but if this is a non-ADAMS visit then please check for missing substantial items.
- AHEP mappings are 'good enough'. Some tweaks may be needed but are generally ok.
- Programmes are at an appropriate level of maturity, i.e. there is enough assessment and student samples for review (only likely to occur if IET is not leading the visit as ADAMS will catch this). This applies to programmes for re-accreditation that have had major changes or for programmes being put forward for accreditation for the first time.
- No major issues flagged by External Examiner reports.
- No planned Major Changes in the next academic year, either to the programmes, department structure or location.

If, any of the above are *not* true then you should consider the following before making a 'no-go' decision:

- Could the shortfall be remedied in time for the visit (you can consider a deadline in consultation with the panel, IET staff and the HEI and other PEI(s) if applicable). Leading to an eventual 'Go' decision if completed on time and to the panel's satisfaction.
- Meet with the HoD
- Ensure it is a majority view of the panel.
- Consider converting to an Advisory Visit.
- Consider whether a postponement of the visit may be appropriate before cancelling.

Principles for accepting 1 module covering an AHEP learning outcome.

- The level of the module is at the level required for the AHEP learning outcome.
- All students must take the module i.e. it should be a mandatory or core module.
- The module cannot be compensated.
- AHEP learning Outcome is achieved at the threshold level, demonstrated in samples of student work
- Assessments and assessment criteria must be robust and clearly demonstrate that all students on the programme will be assessed on the AHEP learning outcome claimed.
- Component thresholds may be required, (if not already in place), in the case where multiple assessments are used to assess different aspects of the AHEP learning outcome.

Structuring the desk review

- Download the full submission if possible – much quicker and more flexible to access documents locally than online (and can review offline if necessary). NB: you will need to download the modules folder separately, as this is often very large and is not automatically included in the 'Download All' in ADAMS.
- Start with specification materials – programme list, departmental overview and AHEP 4 mappings.

These tell you what the department claims it is delivering.

- Next look at programme delivery, lectures, classes, tutorials, groupwork, projects and PBL (if necessary, including a brief top-level sampling/browse of modules that cross-check particular points).

These tell you whether the department is delivering what their own specifications say they are delivering.

- Then look (top-down) at assessments of all types – including exams, coursework, groupwork, PBL and projects (top-down means primary focus is on assessment specifications/descriptions, marking criteria, intended learning outcomes, and assessment implementations (exam papers, lab report specifications, project specifications etc; not (yet) detailed samples of student work)

These enable a judgement to be made on whether the module assessments have the potential to meet the LOs as specified in the module specification, programme specification and AHEP 4 programme mapping.

Department-level analysis (0.0):

- Find a list of programmes (0.1)
- Find departmental block diagram(s) (ADAMS 0.0) showing integrated module structure
- How are modules shared (usually large commonality at levels 4/5, more specialisation at levels 6/7)?
- Find the list of all modules showing module codes.
- Review department's overview of philosophy and aspirations:
 - It should report on major structural changes to department and/or programmes since last accreditation
 - It should outline any significant forthcoming changes over next accreditation period
 - Important to understand what you are accrediting (including backdating requirements, substantive changes going forward, and how relevant (retrospective) module evidence is to programmes as being delivered over next 5 years (e.g. will 1st output review of new programmes be needed as follow-up?))
- Student numbers:
 - Are they small or large overall?
 - How are they distributed between programmes - what are strengths/weaknesses of department's provision?
 - Is department growing, stable or struggling?
- What research/industry profile does the department have?
- What USPs does the department have (in their own opinion)? – see also the HoD presentation for this information.

Programme Aims, Learning Outcomes and Content (1.0 & 2.0)

- Review detail of Programme Specifications
 - Are title and aims for each programme distinctive and differentiated (check for IET Requirement R1)?
 - Are BEng aims different from MEng aims?
 - Are Prog Specs consistent with prospectus claims (NB: Many (junior) academic staff are largely unaware of programme specs, which are often also out of date as a result, although they should be updated for any substantive programme revisions.)
 - Do Prog Specs provide adequate detail of programme aims, delivery methods, and assessment methods (they are often quite scanty, especially on assessments)?
- Remaining sections of ADAMS 1.0 may contain:

- ADAMS 1.3: AHEP 4 programme mappings – should be submitted on the latest IET templates to ensure required information is provided (also may be found in ADAMS 2.0)
- (ADAMS 1.4/1.5: Credit allocations/year (trivial/mostly standard))
- ADAMS 1.6: Industrial involvement in programme design – useful preparation for meeting with industrialists, may contain IAB minutes, list of industrialists/backgrounds etc
- ADAMS 1.7: Impact of scholarship and research activity – useful for 1 or 2 questions to staff meeting, but seldom results in any requirements, recommendations or commendations, as sectoral diversity is encouraged.

Assessment (3.0 and Module sampling)

- ADAMS 3.0, 3.1 and 3.2 do not contain detailed assessment examples (these are in the Modules folder), but may contain useful assessment specification documents, e.g assessment policies and specifications.
- ADAMS 3.3 contains histograms and scatter diagrams showing module marks distributions and exam/coursework mark distributions. These are useful for understanding how well students performed on the actual assessments set by the department, and potentially identifying problem areas where sampling of module exams and scripts may be usefully directed.
- ADAMS 3.5 usually contains the HEI's assessment regulations, which need to be checked to confirm that they are compliant with IET/Engineering Council requirements e.g. for compensation and condonement, progression (BEng/MEng year pass marks and transfers) etc.

Projects (4.0)

- Every accreditor should expect to sample some projects and browse project reports and corresponding marks awarded to check:
 - standards are consistent with expected academic levels and AHEP 4
 - marking mechanisms are fair and meet IET Requirement R8 (independent (and sufficiently detailed) marking by at least two markers, with a robust moderation process)
 - Correlation of projects with their marks outcomes in the submitted projects is variable, and not always easily identified; sometimes the relevant marks are not submitted at all and have to be requested subsequently.
- Other project areas to check are:
 - Project selection and allocation process (triangulate with student meeting)
 - Staff supervision arrangements (regularity of meetings, and formative/summative feedback processes to students – also triangulate with student meeting)
 - Project planning, management and other project areas that are included in the project AHEP 4 LOs (e.g. ethics, sustainability, risk, security, EDI, practical work and lab facilities for project activity) – these are often overclaimed in the AHEP 4 mappings for the project.

Student Support and Staffing (5.0)

- These areas are important to review but mostly tend to generate commendable department activities and/or recommendations rather than requirements, as they are focused on support activities rather than primary requirements for awarding accreditation (meeting AHEP LOs etc):
 - Student entry routes and distribution, progression and failure rates
 - Student support, and particularly employability support
 - Industrial involvement in the student experience, including visiting lecturers, industry presentations, placements and internships, and collaborative industrial activities including research with industry
 - Use of teaching fellows, PG tutors and lab assistants and visiting staff
 - Department staff numbers (including academic, technical and administrative support), and staff/student ratios – are they sufficiently resourced?
 - Professional registration and membership of students and staff (often an IET requirement for the department to make better efforts to support staff registration).

Resources and Facilities (6.0)

- Most of the panels opinions on resources and facilities are solidified through the laboratory and department tour
- In addition, the panel needs to be satisfied that the department is properly funded and suitably equipped in terms of laboratory, computer lab and other teaching space, and physical equipment in labs (computing, software tools and engineering hardware lab equipment)

Quality Assurance and Enhancement (7.0)

- This section includes minutes of relevant committees (teaching and staff-student liaison), and external 'league table' information such as NSS scores
- It should also contain recent HEI-level periodic reviews and any relevant external reviews (annual monitoring reviews operate at module level and so should be included in module folders)
- Most importantly, it should include external examiner reports and responses – these are useful to see how well the external examiners are keeping the department up to the mark, but note that they are paid by the university to apply its own quality assurance framework (including responding to the questions asked on the HEI's annual report form), and these questions will generally not align exactly with engineering accreditation requirements.

Module boxes

- A full set of module documentation should be provided for all modules for the most recent year that was completed prior to the accreditation visit, including:
 - Module specification
 - Assessment briefs
 - Sample (or all) teaching materials, including lecture notes, coursework briefs etc
 - Sample exam and coursework scripts for all assessments for 1 year
 - Ideally, annual monitoring evidence for each module (although this is often not provided)
- It is unusual to find that the full repertoire of all of the above are provided for all modules in the initial submission, hence it is important for all members of the accreditation panel to sample a subset of modules as needed to confirm or triangulate claims made by the department as they work top-down through the various sections of the submissions. Ideally the panel chair will identify the subject expertise of the panel members at the start of the desk review so as to ensure that a suitable sampling of all the submitted material is checked prior to the visit.
- There is very little time to complete further module checks during the visit, due to pre-specified meetings throughout the two days, so it is essential that all panel members sample a suitable subset of modules and project content before the visit, as part of their desk review.

It is not expected that all module material submitted will be sampled, and particularly not all student samples!

A note about Joint Visits

The IET has joint visit protocols with BCS and IMechE. These can be visits led by either institution. If they are IET led the visit will be via ADAMS with an agreed joint agenda. Discussion topics are submitted as per the usual process.

If the visit is led by BCS or IMechE the submission will be provided as per their processes, which are largely aligned to the IET's.

Following the visit each institution will produce their own report and follow their own processes.

Engineering Accreditation Board (EAB)

When an engineering programme is to be accredited by more than one of the professional engineering institutions (PEIs), joint visits have for a number of years managed through the Engineering Accreditation Board (EAB).

However, the 'Engineering Accreditation Board' activity is currently under review.

The EAB has been a joint initiative by the PEIs and, for many years supported with a secretariat by the Engineering Council. The EAB is reviewing its operations, including future arrangements for joint accreditation visits.

EAB visits during the 2023-24 academic year have been completed with the Engineering Council providing secretariat. Visits for 2024-25 are being planned with PEIs sharing secretariat arrangements. Any requests for visits beyond that time will be considered on a case-by-case basis by PEIs until such a time as new secretariat arrangements may be confirmed.

It is anticipated that one final EAB meeting will be held once the organisation considering provision of alternative secretariat arrangements is in a position to present a full proposal to PEIs.



International Accreditation visits

Overview

International visits are becoming increasingly prominent in our annual schedule with many new HEIs contacting us as well as re-accreditations for those already accredited. Typically, the panel for International visits will be 2 accreditors and 1 IET staff member. The accreditors will usually be academics, but occasionally it may be appropriate to send an industrialist depending on the programme/s.

Submission

The submission for the International visits is identical to that of the UK ones. However, occasionally they have difficulty uploading all the documentation to ADAMS and therefore there is more of a reliance on providing some further examples of assessment on the visit than there is for UK visits.

Timescales

International Accreditation visits do not differ greatly from UK visits except we ask for the submission to be provided 12 weeks prior to the visit instead of 8 and the actual visit may be slightly longer depending on the location. This will be fully communicated before you agree to a visit.



Other Academic Accreditation Activities

Initial Reviews

Overview

An Initial Review is the first stage of the academic accreditation process for those departments who are either new to accreditation or who wish to put forward new types of programmes (either new levels or subject areas).

A request for accreditation is initiated by a Department which has previously been accredited (reaccreditation) or from a new Department. The request can come from new UK and Overseas Departments

- Occurs in response to a request from the Department

- Proceed with initial review if accreditation resources permit and the programmes fall within the IET's remit in terms of level and subject area*.
- The decision to proceed with a review or visit is made by the IET based on strategic priorities and available resources.
- The Department will need to provide programme specifications, statistics and an overview of the department.
- Request is normally reviewed by at least two accreditors matched to their expertise.
- Accreditors assess whether the programmes fall within IET remit and contain no more than 30% non-technical content.
- Usually results in an Advisory Visit.

*We can accredit Academic programmes from EQF level 5 to 7 (exceptionally we may also be asked to accredit doctorate programmes but we can only accredit these in line with the AHEP learning outcomes for level 7 programmes (partial CEng – Further learning).

Subject areas that tend to be out of scope for IET accreditation are those that are heavily, Chemical Engineering or civil Engineering. Some Engineering Management programmes may also be too heavily business and management too.

Please refer to the Initial Review Report Template for advice on how to complete this. As with the main visit it is pre-populated with the programmes under consideration by the IET staff. There is also some red text which acts as guidance for what you will need to write in each section.

Submission

The Initial Review is conducted outside of ADAMS. Departments will submit the following via email which will be formatted and passed to the selected Panel:

- Programme Specification (for each programme to be considered)
- Progressions Statistics – Entry, exit and graduation statistics (for each programme to be considered)
- Department Overview document – giving brief details of the university and the department to which these programmes belong. This is also the opportunity to provide any other information the department feels would be useful to the panel.

Timescales

Once the panel have the submission we ask that they produce the report within 4 weeks (20 working days). The workload for an initial review is not large as the submission is fairly small and the report is not substantial. There is also no obligation to attend an Advisory Visit or other accreditation activity if you conduct the Initial Review, although we may request this if possible.

Advisory Visits

Overview

Advisory visits are usually undertaken following an Initial Review for new departments/ programmes. They are designed to prepare HEIs for an accreditation visit and to increase the likelihood of success for HEIs without currently accredited degrees.

They can also be used for departments whose accreditation has lapsed for 2 or more years or who have undergone significant changes since their last accreditation visit.

The output from an Advisory visit is a report recommending

- Whether the programmes are accreditable (by the IET)
- If yes, then in what timeframe

- Also what actions the Department needs to take in order to prepare for accreditation

Each Advisory visit will have at least two panel members, normally both academics one of whom will chair. The IET staff will support the process but will not attend the visit.

The visit consists of one day where the Panel will review some output, meet with staff and students and tour the labs.

Following the visit a report is produced. As with all report templates this will be pre-populated by IET staff and red text will guide the panel as to the information expected to be included. The last section within the report is to guide the department on their next steps. Usually this will be some recommendations for changes which will need to be made before accreditation. For example, if the department are currently not meeting the IETs requirements with regards compensation the Panel would make them aware of this and suggest that they address it prior to any accreditation visit.

Submission

The Advisory visit submission will be provided within ADAMS. Departments will be asked to submit:

- Programme Specifications
- Programme Regulations
- Department Organisation Chart
- External Examiner reports/comments
- Programme handbook for staff and/or Students
- List of staff expertise
- Summary of industrial influence on the programme
- Information about any conditions arising from validation (if a new programme)
- Summary of major changes since last accreditation (if previously accredited)
- AHEP Draft mapping
- Progression statistics
- QA Manual or Handbook
- Project Handbook

Also, it is desirable to provide:

- Final year exam papers if available (The most recently taken examination question papers for the final two years of the programmes)
- Project reports if available, three for each programme, one marked just above the threshold, one at midpoint and one just above the distinction/first class threshold. In addition, marking sheets should also be provided
- Minutes of key committee concerned with Teaching and Learning if they have discussed the programme

Timescales

The submission is made available to the Panel 4 weeks before the visit date. Once the panel have the submission we ask that they produce the discussion topics at least 4 working days prior to the visit. The visit itself is only one day (or two for international visits). We ask that a report is produced within 10 working days of the visit. This report will outline some recommended actions to the department but there is no formal action plan to follow up on.

There is also no obligation to attend the full accreditation visit if you are part of the Advisory Visit Panel although we may request this if possible. If you are part of an International Advisory Visit we may ask you to act as their IET Accreditation Advisor. The IAA will offer advice on IET accreditation submission

requirements, policy, guidelines and procedure to help the IHEI produce a concise and relevant submission.

Monitoring Reviews/Visits

Overview

A Monitoring review may be set by a visiting panel when less than 5 years accreditation is awarded to a programme. The review usually includes an assessment of the progress made against the action plan and any other issues identified by the visiting panel. This review is carried out for UK and overseas Departments. In some cases, it may be felt that a visit is required, for example if there were some resources issues identified at the previous visit or if it is considered more appropriate to discuss progress face to face. This can then be arranged as a Monitoring Visit. The report and submission will be the same.

The department will be asked to request the review so that it occurs before the end of the academic year of the last accredited intake. Materials are normally reviewed by the previous chair of the visit plus at least one other panel member.

The Monitoring review/visit report template, as with all report templates will be pre-populated by IET staff and red text will guide the panel as to the information expected to be included. The IET staff will also add in the latest version of the departments Action Plan with their comments. The Panel will then be expected to complete the report sections as well as comment on the individual Action Plan items (as you would be following the submission of an Action Plan following a full visit).

Submission

The Monitoring visit and review submissions will be provided within ADAMS. Departments will be asked to submit:

- Programme specifications, including structure and assessment regulations
- Updated Action Plan
- Supporting documentation: Due to the nature of the monitoring review/visit, we do not know in advance what specific documentation will be required for a particular department. This section should be used to upload any documentation required in support of actions taken as a result of the previous action plan.

Timescales

Monitoring Reviews typically take place towards the end of an academic year once the department has made sufficient progress on their actions. They will be asked to submit their evidence via ADAMS and once the Panel has the submission we ask that they provide the report within 20 working days. It can be that this is not possible as further evidence is requested from the department. If this is the case, we will liaise with the Panel about their ongoing availability to look at the additional documentation, so we can manage the department's expectations. A possible outcome from a Monitoring review is that the Panel decide that it needs to be converted to a monitoring visit, in which case logistical arrangements will be made and a mutually agreeable date will be found.

Monitoring Visits will require the department to submit via ADAMS at least 20 working days prior to the agreed visit date. Monitoring visits are typically one day. The Panel are asked to provide the report within 10 working days of the visit.

Both Monitoring Visit and Review reports will include an update to the Action Plan to determine what actions are now closed, as well as confirmation of any accreditation which has been awarded.

First Output Reviews

Overview

A first output review is an assessment of the operation of the final two years (1 year for MSc) of a new programme with the view to extending accreditation awarded from a previous visit. Whilst we can accredit programmes when the first cohort is in their final year we will only grant limited accreditation. The First Output Review allows us to extend this to the full five year period.

Once the first cohort of a new programme has graduated the Department must submit the first output report materials. Materials are reviewed by two accreditors, preferably the previous chair of the visit plus one other panel member.

Accreditation can only be awarded in line with the period of accreditation awarded to other programmes within the Department or in line with the scoring of the visit report. If this review reveals significant issues a monitoring visit may be required.

Once again, the report template will be pre-populated by IET staff to confirm which programmes are to be considered and red text is provided to guide the Panel on what each section should include. You will not need to comment on the Action Plan progress for the First Output Review in detail, but if any areas of concern are raised this should be included in the report.

Submission

Departments will provide the submission via ADAMS. This will include:

- Final year examination papers and examination results
- Programme classification statistics
- Individual project results and a sample of individual project reports
- External Examiners reports

Timescales

First Output Reviews typically take place at the end of an academic year once the department is able to provide the examples of output. Once the submission is available via ADAMS we ask that the Panel produce a report within 20 working days. As with the monitoring review it can be that this is not possible as further evidence is requested from the department. If this is the case, we will liaise with the Panel about their ongoing availability to look at the additional documentation, so we can manage the department's expectations.

Commonality Reviews

Overview

A commonality review is an assessment to confirm whether new programmes or programmes not put forward for accreditation previously share 70 percent of their content with accredited programmes within the same department, with a view to awarding accreditation. This could include new sandwich variants of full time programmes which are already accredited, or new title changes where small areas of content has been amended, or a department deciding to recognise a particular pathway with a separate degree title.

This usually occurs in between accreditation visits. The request is normally reviewed by the previous chair of the visit plus one other panel member.

Accreditation can only be awarded to the programmes under consideration in line with the accredited

programmes they have been assessed against. If this review reveals significant issues the decision may be deferred until the next full accreditation visit or the Department may request an accreditation visit.

The submission will be made available by ADAMS and will include a mapping of how the new programme compares to the previously accredited programme.

There is no report required for the commonality review. The Panel are only asked to confirm that they believe the programme/s put forward share 70% commonality with an existing accredited programme.

Submission

This will be provided in ADAMS and we will ask the department to provide:

- Programme specifications for the new programmes
- Mapping between the existing accredited programme and the new one that they are putting forward
- Any other additional documentation the department wishes to submit to support the review

Timescales

Once the submission is available on ADAMS the Panel will be asked to provide their findings via the forum within 20 working days. This will be either confirmation of commonality of details of how it fails to meet the requirements.

Extension Requests

Overview

An extension request review is carried out when the department requests an extension of accreditation beyond their 5-year period. The request is usually a result of major structural changes to the organisation or programmes or moving buildings that means holding a visit will be impractical.

The request is usually reviewed by the previous Chair of the visit plus one other panel member. Accreditation period usually extended by a maximum of 1 year beyond the 5-year accreditation period. If the review reveals significant issues a monitoring visit may be required.

If there have been no major changes to the programme/s since the previous accreditation and the progress on the Action Plan has been satisfactory the Panel can recommend that an extension is granted.

Submission

The departments will be asked to provide the following:

- Programme specifications
- Programme validation documentation
- A document explaining the reasons they are seeking an extension to the accreditation.
- Updated Action Plan
- Any additional documentation they feel appropriate

Timescales

Once the information has been provided by the department we ask for the Panel to provide their decision within 20 working days. There is no formal report for this activity which can be conducted via email.

Major Change Review

Overview

A Major Change review is an assessment to confirm whether existing programmes still meet AHEP learning outcomes if they have had significant changes to content between Accreditation Visits.

The rules

- The degree of change must be between 30% and 50% (this closes the gap between a commonality review and the trigger for an Accreditation Visit).
- If there is over 50% change then a full Accreditation Visit will be necessary.
- The programmes must be currently accredited and the last full visit to accredit the programme took place within the last two years.
- Accreditation can only be awarded to the programmes under consideration in line with when the next Accreditation Visit is due.
- If this review reveals significant issues the decision may be deferred until the next full accreditation visit or the Department may request an accreditation visit.
- The submission must be made available through the IET's SharePoint.
- A 'light-touch' visit will be required to confirm continuation of accreditation to programmes that have undergone a major change in between the normal cycle of accreditation visits
- The request is normally reviewed by the previous chair of the visit plus one other panel member.
- must not be used to consider:
 - new programmes
 - programmes where more than 50% of the content has changed
 - extensions to accreditation

Submission

This will be provided in SharePoint and we will ask the department to provide:

- updated AHEP mapping
- module specifications, assessments and student work
- programme specifications
- mapping of 'old to new' versions of the programmes being considered
- overview of changes made
- action plan update
- any additional information requested by the IET after initial review of the submission.

Timescales

Once the submission is available on SharePoint the Panel will be asked to provide their initial findings within 20 working days. At this point the Panel can request further information and confirm the suitability of the programmes to be review under this process.

Once the Panel provides a 'go' decision a virtual visit can be booked.

The Panel is expected to produce discussion topics at least 4 working days prior to the visit. The visit itself is usually one day and comprises of a meeting with key staff at the HEI. We ask that a report is produced within 10 working days of the visit. This report may outline some recommended actions to the department and the decision to either allow the programmes to remain accredited or trigger an Accreditation Visit.



Physical Versus Virtual/ Hybrid Activities

The Engineering Council has issued guidance to help PEIs consider when physical/ virtual / hybrid activities are appropriate.

[Risk based accreditation \(engc.org.uk\)](https://engc.org.uk)

Principles:

For Accreditation Visits, a physical visit is the default position and mandatory where one or more of the following apply:

1. The provider is new to accreditation.
2. The programme is new to accreditation and is substantially different to previous programmes currently accredited at the provider.
3. The previous Action Plan contained a requirement relating to inadequacy of physical resources or other serious concerns.
4. A visit report from a virtual visit indicated issues/concerns in properly monitoring laboratory provision or meeting with students.
5. An education regulator has raised concerns related to the education provided by the provider.
6. The provider has requested an in-person visit and the PEI is happy to accommodate this.
7. The delivery site has not received an in-person visit previously or in the last 5 years or more.
8. The IET deems an in-person visit is appropriate for any other reason.

In-person participation is preferred, however virtual participation/ visit arrangements are permitted in the following situations and where alternatives have been explored:

1. Where a trainee accreditor based outside of the country where the visit is taking place.
2. Where a visit may be affected by strike/ industrial action or government restrictions on travel
3. Where there are many delivery sites involved.
4. Medical conditions or medical emergencies prevent travel and/ or in-person participation.

Any decision to convert a physical visit to a hybrid or wholly virtual visit is taken by the Academic Accreditation Manager.

Virtual activities

The following Activities are Virtual by default:

1. Meeting with industrial representatives is by default online but can be in-person.
2. Advisory Visit
3. International Advisory Visits
4. Monitoring Visit



Annual Reports

Overview

The annual report is sent to all heads of departments via ADAMS as a reminder about any upcoming or outstanding actions they have for the academic year ahead.

The Annual report may also inform department of any recent or upcoming developments in the accreditation process as well as any other wider activities relating to accreditation. Departments are sent

details of the next action per programme.

They are also asked to provide an update on their Action Plan following their most recent visit/review. The only exception to this are those who are imminently due a visit (in the next few months) or those currently in the post-visit process.

Submission

If we receive an updated Action Plan this will be forwarded to the Panel from the previous visit to comment. They may also provide some supplementary documentation to support the update.

Timescales

The Panel will be asked to provide feedback on any updates they have provided. This may be as simple as confirming that they are keeping to the plan and all is well. But occasionally you may need to steer them in another direction.

Under each action point is a space for the panel to comment annually, usually the panel chair will provide comments which the rest of the panel can agree. You can liaise with the IET staff around this and may wish to provide your comments in email form which the staff can slot into the Action Plan if there is nothing specific to say.

We endeavour to respond to departments within 20 working days after they have submitted the update.



Academic Accreditation Committee (AAC)

Overview

AAC develops, implements, and reviews policies and procedures for the accreditation of academic programmes that either contribute to, or satisfy, the current and future educational requirements for Chartered and Incorporated Engineers, taking into account the current and future needs of the industry.

There is also an operational remit of the AAC to ratify Accreditation decisions, which involves review of the visits reports and ensuring consistency and fairness in the decision-making process, track trends and identify and act on opportunities for improvement.

Want to get involved?

If you are interested in joining the Committee you can express an interest to one of the Academic Accreditation staff by contacting them directly or emailing accreditation@theiet.org. There is an annual call out for new members.

Person requirements

- an experienced and active Academic Accreditor, with leadership capability and a demonstrable interest in, and commitment to, the accreditation process
- Be able to lead teams and help them arrive at consensual, fair and unbiased decisions;
- Be able to take a *leading* role in pre and post visit accreditation activity

Main duties and responsibilities

- chair accreditation visits and other associated activities and produce the reports for these (in conjunction with the rest of the visiting panel and allocated IET staff member);

- approve reports and action plans as a result of accreditation visits;
- review academic programmes for accreditation and make decisions thereon with delegated authority;
- advise IET staff on the appointment of a team of Accreditors to ensure a balance of those from industry and academia, as well as provide feedback on their training visits and suitability to be appointed as full members of the Academic Accreditation Team;
- set and uphold IET accreditation policy;
- contribute to the development of Higher Education both nationally and internationally, within the strategic remit of the IET;
- report to the Registration and Standards Committee;
- represent the IET and the Professionally Registered engineering community;
- present judgments in a measured and constructive way;
- advise of potential conflicts of interest before agreeing to participate in a discussion;
- be adequately prepared for a meeting by reading the papers in advance and, where necessary, taking part in email discussions, forums or conference calls;
- commit to taking part for the whole 2-day duration of the visit unless other prior agreement is made with IET Staff;
- respect equality, diversity and inclusion;
- adhere to data protection legislation throughout all processes.

Time Commitment

- Members are appointed for three years, and then subject to annual renewal at the discretion of IET Staff in consultation with the AAC Chair and Vice Chair.
- When undertaking this role you will need to:
- attend a one-day training session annually;
- Chair at least one visit. A visit also involves one to two days for preparation in advance of the visit and one day for producing the report following the visit;
- attend three committee meetings per year plus a teleconference once a month.
- Minimum commitment per year: 7 days.
- This role also involves travelling to UK and non-UK destinations. All travel, meals and accommodation expenses related to visits will be met.



Training and Annual Conference

Online training materials

Online training materials are available via SharePoint.

It is expected that all Accreditors stay up to date with the latest IET policies and processes related to the Academic Accreditation Activity.

This is updated each year but, broadly will cover:

- AHEP
- IET Accreditation Criteria, Requirements and Guidelines
- The Accreditation process and documentation
- Summary of changes between academic years

Please contact the accreditation team on accreditation@theiet.org to request access to the training material.

Peer review

After each Accreditation Visit we will send you a feedback form that we would be grateful for you to complete. This is designed so that we can identify if there are any areas of training needed, as well as being able to praise exceptional contributions to the process. We encourage as many panel members as possible to complete this. Please rest assured that any comments made are entirely confidential.

Within the feedback form you are asked to score your panel colleagues from 1 - 4 based on statements that relate to pre-visit, on-visit and post-visit engagement. There is also an opportunity to provide feedback on general aspects of the visit.

If you have any suggestions for improving the experience of both the panel and university, we would be glad to hear it.

Completed forms can be returned to accreditation@theiet.org

Annual Conference

Each year we are committed to providing an opportunity to our Academic Accreditor community to join us in a conference. It offers an opportunity to discuss accreditation related matters and any upcoming possible changes as a cohort before the Academic Accreditation Committee refines any decisions and also a networking opportunity to meet like-minded people.

The conference is sometimes offered a hybrid event and is held at either Futures place, Stevenage or Savoy Place, London and usually runs in September each year.

Past Conferences have included talks on Transnational Education, International Accreditation, AHEP 4 Reflection and Policy Refinement workshop, innovative Engineering provision and IET strategy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters and Volunteer Excellence to name a few.



Directory

IET – Academic Accreditation

<https://www.theiet.org/career/accreditation/academic-accreditation/guidance-policy>

- Guidance on Threshold Academic Standards
- Guidance for Identifying Individual Contributions in MEng Projects for BEng Awards
- Guidance on External Academic Audit
- Guidance for the Teaching of Engineering Ethics
 - Recommended Resources in Support of the Embedding of Ethics into the Curriculum
- Guidance for Planning and Completing an ADAMS Submission
- Statement of Degree/ Graduate Apprenticeships
- Guidance for new AHEP 4 Learning Outcomes
 - Guidance on the Teaching and Assessment of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) (AHEP LO 11)
 - Guidance on Teaching and Assessment of Risk and Security (AHEP LOs 9 & 10)
 - Guidance on Teaching and Assessment of AHEP 4 LO Lifelong Learning (AHEP LO 18)

IET – International

<https://www.theiet.org/career/accreditation/academic-accreditation/international-academic-accreditation>

- International Academic Accreditation
- NBA (India) Vs AHEP 4 Programme Outcomes guidance

IET – Other

<https://www.theiet.org/career/accreditation/academic-accreditation>

- Overview
- Academic Accreditation Committee
- Accreditation process
- Become an academic accreditor
- Policy and Guidance
- ADAMS and Submission Guidance

IET - Related activities

- Awards and Prizes
- Academic Partners and Affiliates
- Membership and Professional Registration

Engineering Council (EngC)

- Statement on top up degree titles
- IET university-impact-reports-for-2020-21 template
- EngC Degree titles of accredited or approved programmes (v.1) April 2022
- Dual Accreditation May 2023
- Risk-based accreditation visits policy summary for providers
- Guidance On Industrial Action Affecting Recognised Programmes V0.1
- AHEP Fourth Edition
- AHEP Fourth Edition Defining Characteristics And Learning Outcomes Table
- AHEP Fourth Edition Summary Of Key Changes

- Guidance On Changes Affecting Recognised Programmes
- Compensation and Condonement
- Accredited Degree logo
- Accredited course search

International

- European accreditation (EUR-ACE)
- International Recognition outside of Europe
- International Engineering Education Accords
- International Engineering Alliance
- IEA Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies



How to contact us

Email: accreditation@theiet.org Tel: +44 (0) 1438 765610