

# ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION INTERNATIONAL CRITERIA.



**Institution of  
MECHANICAL  
ENGINEERS**

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers accredits a number of degrees at universities outside of the United Kingdom. The accreditation criteria, process and paperwork are the same as if the accreditation were to be carried out within the UK.

1. All overseas requests are reviewed on an individual basis against criteria that consider whether the country is a member of FEANI, the Washington or Sydney Accord. Whether they are a target country for membership and whether it is viable for the Institution to attend.
2. Host universities are required to pay the full costs of the accreditation visit.
3. Each accreditation panel for a visit will be made up of trained and experienced IMechE accreditation assessors (2 Academics and 1 Industrialist) plus a member of staff. A local industrialist and a local branch member may be invited if required to support the panel members.
4. The International Initial Submission Form must be completed in full for any request to be considered. Part of this process is to establish the current level of engagement with the IMechE.
5. Programmes are accredited for a maximum of five years. Another accreditation visit is then required and again the host university must pay the full costs.

## Accreditation

All programmes are reviewed against the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC) and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers' Academic Accreditation Guidelines. The reviewers comprise of a mix of academics and industrialists that volunteer for the Academic Standards Committee. The Institution is licensed by the Engineering Council to accredit programmes towards IEng or CEng academic requirements for professional registration, after which demonstration of competence is required to become a professionally registered engineer. All accreditation decisions are made by the Committee which meets four times a year. An accreditation panel would expect to see a university requesting accreditation to have IMechE professionally registered staff and IMechE Affiliate student members. The IMechE would also expect the University to have established or be actively in the process of establishing good links with their nearest regional IMechE branch:

<http://nearyou.imeche.org/near-you/overview>

## International Agreements

The Institution accepts academic qualifications in line with registration and membership requirements via a number of international agreements. These agreements enable Professional Institutions to accept validation processes in terms of academic qualifications of member states signed up to them, and how these map to satisfy the academic requirements as laid down by UK-SPEC.

Each member of the group of countries involved in the various agreements has expressed its confidence in the Quality Assurance processes of the other countries. By extension, this leads to the effective mutual recognition of accredited Engineering Degree courses in each of the signatory countries. When presented with such qualifications (by applicants for Institution membership), we will automatically accept accredited programmes under the various agreements as meeting the academic part of IMechE membership requirements for the relevant grade of registration and/or membership.

## FEANI

FEANI has 31 members, representing 31 European countries. The UK is represented by the British National FEANI Committee (c/o Engineering Council). There is a bilateral agreement between the UK and various European countries that are members through the FEANI framework.

Under the auspice of FEANI, the Institution of Mechanical Engineers will automatically accept academic qualifications of candidates from those programmes covered by the FEANI framework for membership for IEng (3-year programmes) and CEng (5-year programmes) without the need for further review. Please go to <http://www.feani.org/site/> for more information.

## Washington Accord

The Engineering Council is the UK signatory to the Washington Accord. Therefore, if your country is a member, then there is no need for the IMechE to undertake its own visit, as we will automatically accept accredited programmes under the Washington Accord Agreement when presented as qualifications by applicants for Institution membership:

<http://www.washingtonaccord.org/>

<http://www.imeche.org/membership/membership-registration/Eligibility/academic-requirements>

Both of these routes should be carefully considered before exploring routes of accreditation from the UK.

In terms of providing further accreditation support, the IMechE can support all students and staff through IMechE membership and associated benefits. Full details can be found here:

[www.imeche.org/students](http://www.imeche.org/students)

<http://www.imeche.org/membership/membership-registration/How-to-apply/Which-grade>

## Costs

The Institution currently charges a cost recovery fee of £3,000 plus VAT for all accreditation visits. If a visit were to be approved, it is the Institution's policy that all universities outside the UK mainland also meet the total costs of the accreditation visit. These costs include travel (Business Class flights and UK travel expenses), accommodation and all other relevant expenses (meals, transfers etc). A visiting team would consist of 3 experienced accreditation assessors plus an Academic Consultant acting as secretariat who would all normally require between 3- and 5-nights' accommodation.

The estimated costs would therefore include:

- Business Class\* return air travel from London x4 people
- UK Travel x4 people
- Accommodation at 3\* hotel for a maximum 5 nights x4 people
- Meals x4 people
- Consultancy fees borne by the Institution (where applicable)

(\* if flight is over three hours in duration)

**All arrangements for travel (including transfers) and accommodation (including meals) must be completed at least 30 days prior to the commencement of the visit. Failure to do so will result in the Institution cancelling the visit.**

## Submission Information

To progress with discussions, there are a few initial questions to consider before submitting your International Initial Submission Form:

1. Typically, Bachelors programmes (BSc, BEng) would be accredited for IEng and possibly part of CEng academic registration. Typically, MEng or MSc would be accredited for CEng academic registration. Please note that an accredited MSc only partially satisfies the requirements of the educational base for IMechE membership. Even though a university has applied for accreditation at CEng level, the recommendation may be to accredit it to IEng and/or approve programmes for EngTech registration. Would these be attractive levels of membership for potential candidates and output for the universities?
2. The entire accreditation process and resulting courses need to be conducted in English, is this so?

3. Have all programmes been put forward for review had a graduating cohort from them?
4. Under the auspice of the Engineering Council, is the IMechE the only signatory of the Washington Accord that has been asked to accredit your programmes? I.e. have ABET or another signatory been asked to accredit your programmes?
5. The Academic Standards Committee will expect to see students registered with the Institution; similarly, that staff are professional registered to promote accredited programmes. Is this the case?

If you have answered 'YES' to the above questions, then we would ask you to complete the International Initial Submission Form.

All submission forms and supporting information including the IMechE Accreditation Guidelines, can be found online at the following links:

<https://www.imeche.org/membership-registration/support-for-universities/how-do-i-get-my-university-accredited>

[www.imeche.org/studentaffiliate](http://www.imeche.org/studentaffiliate)

### **Submission Deadlines**

- The International Initial Submission form must be completed before any visit is to be agreed. The Committee will then review this and advise if additional information is needed. The Committee would use this information along with our internal procedures to confirm whether a visit is appropriate. If agreed, the Committee will request for the Main Submission to be sent in and agree a visit date.
- The Main Submission must be completed and submitted to the Institution at least 12 weeks before an accreditation visit.

Please note that in order to secure the most cost-effective flights and accommodation, universities are asked to give as much notice as possible for suitable accreditation visit dates. Below is a copy of a draft timetable to highlight how a visit may be scheduled and a copy of the proposed protocol which covers all arrangements.

We look forward to receiving your responses and initial submission in due course.

### **Contact Us**

If you have any questions on the process or to request any forms and guidance, please email [uniaccreditation@imeche.org](mailto:uniaccreditation@imeche.org) or write to:

Academic Accreditation  
Institution of Mechanical Engineers  
1 Birdcage Walk  
LONDON SW1H 9JJ

Please note that all correspondence regarding any aspect of the accreditation process should be sent to the IMechE. Universities must not enter into correspondence with members of the visiting panel.

### **Additional Information**

Please read on for further information and examples of:

- The Draft Overseas Degree Accreditation Visit Programme;
- A Typical timeframe for entire process; and
- The Visit protocol.

# DRAFT INTERNATIONAL VISIT PROGRAMME.

Please arrange for transportation to and from the airport to the hotel.

<b>Friday</b>	Business Class Flights from UK (typically Heathrow)
<b>Saturday</b>	Arrival - University to collect visiting team and transport to hotel – private IMechE team day
<b>Sunday</b>	Afternoon - Private IMechE meeting at hotel to refresh on paperwork and discuss submission
<b>Monday</b>	<p><b>1000 – 1130</b> – Private IMechE meeting at hotel to finalise a list of topics to be discussed and clarified during the accreditation visit</p> <p><b>1130 – 1200</b> – Team to be collected and transported to campus</p> <p><b>1200 – 1230</b> – Welcome and introduction to key staff – Meeting with the Head of Department and one or two key members of staff to discuss the visit schedule</p> <p><b>1230 – 1330</b> – Working lunch for visiting team and University staff</p> <p><b>1330 – 1600</b> – IMechE team to review course work, projects, exam papers and marked scripts, research and consultancy work</p> <p><b>1600 – 1630</b> – Presentation from University to the visiting team. This session will include a brief presentation by the Head of Department, giving an overview of the department (10 min approx.), which considers the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– a broader context given under which the programmes under consideration sit</li><li>– changes since the last accreditation visit, including implementation of Conditions and Recommendations (if applicable)</li><li>– future plans</li></ul> <p><b>1630 – 1700</b> – Private IMechE meeting to discuss the material reviewed. Then depart for hotel.</p>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<p><b>0930</b> – Team to be collected from hotel and transported to campus</p> <p><b>1000 – 1030</b> – Discussion with Staff on the aims and objectives of the degree programme – Breadth, depth and Learning Outcomes achieved</p> <p><b>1030 – 1230</b> – Meeting with Staff to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Science and mathematics</li><li>– Engineering analysis</li><li>– Design and innovation</li><li>– The engineer and society</li><li>– Engineering practice</li></ul> <p><b>1230 – 1300</b> – Discussion of current and planned engagement with the IMechE and membership plans</p>

**1300 – 1315** – Private IMechE team meeting to discuss the questions to students

**1315 – 1400** – Buffet lunch with staff and students

**1400 – 1500** – Private meeting with students; up to 16 students in total, with a minimum of 6. The student group should include some representation from the staff/student liaison committee and represent a cross-section of the undergraduate population. It would help if students wore lapel badges to show their name, course and year.

**1500 – 1700** – Tour of the Department to focus on laboratory facilities, workshops, drawing/design facilities, computer labs and library in support of areas identified and discussed on the previous day. Please provide samples of student work made from hands-on exercises to support design for manufacture.

**1700 – 1730** – Private meeting for the visiting team to discuss the information collated and inform staff of any outstanding matters. Then depart for hotel.

**Wednesday**  
(Half day)

**0900** – Team to be collected from hotel and transported to campus

**0930 – 1030** – Meeting with representatives from the Industrial Liaison Committee.

**1030 – 1200** – Private meeting for the visiting team to discuss findings and confirm Conditions and Recommendations for the visit report (Staff to be available to assist with any outstanding matters. A further review of material or additional visits to facilities may be required at this stage).

**1200 – 1230** – IMechE meeting with staff to provide feedback to the University \*\*\*

**1230 – 1330** – Lunch and Private IMechE team discussion

**1330** – IMechE team departs

\*\*\*The feedback session is not intended to reflect any decision on accreditation. It is used to highlight **some** aspects examined during the visit.

Following the visit, the IMechE Team will prepare a final report for the Academic Standards Committee. This report will be sent to the University for factual checking then the report and its recommendations will be considered by the whole Committee and a decision whether to accredit or not will be made at this stage.

# TYPICAL PROCESS TIMEFRAME.

## **International Initial Submission Form Review: 3 – 6 months**

1. Form received and reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee (ASC).
2. Any issues highlighted are discussed with university and issues resolved/clarified – this may involve information/projects being requested for review by ASC.
3. Once ASC agrees that it is appropriate to conduct a full accreditation visit, a visit date is agreed, and the full submission will be requested along with a selection of project work to be reviewed (must be received by ASC at least 12 weeks before visit date).

## **Accreditation Visit: 4 – 5 days**

1. Full submission received by ASC at least 12 weeks before visit date.
2. Volunteer panel will comprise experienced accreditation assessors (2 Academics and 1 Industrialist plus 1 staff member).
3. Inform any relevant bodies in the country that we are proposing to visit – invite any necessary observers.
4. Agree on accommodation and flights for team.
5. Time should be spent during the visit reviewing project reports, design reports, coursework and tutorial sheets. These tell us much about the type and the standard of projects being undertaken. Paying attention to marking and assessment sheets, and any input from the External Examiner. Viewing a good cross section of projects. The team is looking for technical rigour in depth and breadth of the project. Team members will have already reviewed at least two projects prior to the visit.
6. Visits to the undergraduate teaching laboratories and private discussions with students. The entire visit must be conducted in English.
7. At the end of the visit, the Chair will indicate feedback and explain timeframes.

## **Post Accreditation visit: 3 months**

1. Accreditation visit report written and sent to panel and university for factual checking within 6 weeks of visit.
2. Report goes to ASC for discussion (4 meetings a year).
3. Accreditation letter sent to university within 2 days of meeting.
4. Any issues are highlighted in an Action Plan for the university to respond to.
5. Evidence is required to show that any required actions have been addressed.
6. All supporting information is reviewed by ASC.
7. All accreditation dates are displayed on the IMechE web and Engineering Council website.
8. Follow up exercise to liaise with student and staff as members.
9. Follow up exercise to establish a university Academic Liaison Officer.

# VISIT PROTOCOL.

