

As an engineering student you are part of the next generation of engineering professionals, and it's never too early to start thinking about how your degree can help you in this. Broadly, to become a professionally qualified engineer, you must demonstrate certain standards of competence and commitment in addition to your academic qualifications. Competence is underpinned by the knowledge, understanding and skills you will develop during your degree. The standards are set and maintained by the Engineering Council, the UK regulatory body for the engineering profession, and described in the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC): [www.engc.org.uk/ukspec](http://www.engc.org.uk/ukspec). Engineering Council guidance on some aspects of being a professional engineer, for example sustainability and risk, may also be of help to you in your studies.

## What are professional qualifications?

Professional qualifications provide recognition that your competence has been assessed and you have attained the standard required for admission to the national register at the appropriate level. They are open to any competent practising engineer, with different levels and pathways available. The categories have been developed to provide a progressive career structure, and there are currently over 240,000 individuals on the UK Register. You can only become professionally qualified through membership of one of the 36 professional engineering institutions that are licensed to assess individuals for inclusion on the register.

## What are my options?

Of the four titles awarded by the Engineering Council, Incorporated Engineer (IEng) or Chartered Engineer (CEng) are the two that are most relevant for a graduate. Further information about these titles can be found at: [www.engc.org.uk/benefits.aspx](http://www.engc.org.uk/benefits.aspx)

If your degree is accredited by one of the professional engineering institutions, you can check whether it fully or partially satisfies the education requirement for IEng or CEng registration by using our searchable database: [www.engc.org.uk/courses](http://www.engc.org.uk/courses). If it isn't accredited, don't worry – there are other pathways to professional qualifications, involving an individual assessment of your degree and experience by your chosen professional engineering institution.

## What are my next steps?

You should join one of the 36 professional engineering institutions that covers the title, IEng or CEng, that you think you'd like to work towards. These are listed on [www.engc.org.uk/institutions](http://www.engc.org.uk/institutions). Many of the institutions offer student membership at little or no cost, and joining will give you a head start and mean that you will be able to keep up with what's happening in your field. Once you have graduated you will need to develop your competence, which generally involves workplace experience and some further training, (often referred to as professional development) in preparation for the final step; the professional review interview. Your institution will be able to help you to prepare for this. UK-SPEC describes the requirements that have to be met in order to gain IEng or CEng registration, and gives examples of ways of doing this.

## Why become professionally qualified?

Gaining professional qualifications and having letters after your name will enable employers and the wider society to have confidence that you have the knowledge, skills and attitude they value. It will demonstrate that your competence and understanding of engineering principles has been independently assessed and you have shown a commitment to keeping these skills up-to-date. The standing of registrants is recognised around the world, and increasingly so. In some cases, professional qualifications are required for particular work, and being registered with the Engineering Council can prove helpful in applying for jobs and tendering for work abroad.

There are also important benefits if you want to work abroad. The Engineering Council is the UK signatory to a number of international accords which provide a mechanism for mutual recognition between signatories of engineering education accreditation processes. Effectively, this leads to the mutual recognition of accredited engineering degree courses and, generally, to exemption from the education requirement for practice in each of the signatory countries. Further details can be found on our website [www.engc.org.uk](http://www.engc.org.uk), or through the International Engineering Alliance website, [www.ieagrements.org](http://www.ieagrements.org).

## Benefits of professional qualifications to you as an individual include:

- Improved career prospects
- Status of being part of a technological elite
- International recognition of your qualifications
- Recognition of your expertise and hard work
- Higher earnings potential
- Greater influence within your organisation and industry
- High self-esteem
- Access to life-long learning
- Letters after your name

## Useful weblinks

Benefits of registration: [www.engc.org.uk/benefits.aspx](http://www.engc.org.uk/benefits.aspx)

CEng: [www.engc.org.uk/ceng](http://www.engc.org.uk/ceng)

Engineering Council newsletter: [www.engc.org.uk/about-us/register-news](http://www.engc.org.uk/about-us/register-news)

Guidance on Risk: <http://www.engc.org.uk/risk>

Guidance on Sustainability: [www.engc.org.uk/sustainability](http://www.engc.org.uk/sustainability)

IEng: [www.engc.org.uk/ieng](http://www.engc.org.uk/ieng)

International recognition of UK Qualifications: [www.engc.org.uk/international/](http://www.engc.org.uk/international/)

Professional engineering institutions: [www.engc.org.uk/institutions](http://www.engc.org.uk/institutions)

UK-SPEC: [www.engc.org.uk/ukspec](http://www.engc.org.uk/ukspec)

Accredited course search: [www.eng.org.uk/courses](http://www.eng.org.uk/courses)

International Engineering Alliance: [www.ieagrements.org](http://www.ieagrements.org)

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