

Register News

Engineering Council UK



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WELCOME



Due to the current economic climate, the Engineering Council UK (EC^{UK}) has been taking steps to deal with the growing number of engineering professionals who might wish to significantly improve their job security and career prospects through registration. We are also currently rolling out a marketing campaign to inform and attract candidates from a broad audience across the profession.

With an overall message emphasising that registration as a CEng, IEng or EngTech differentiates candidates through added status and recognition, the campaign includes editorial, advertising and an email 'refer a friend' scheme for current registrants. We have also been busy updating our website with a view to making it more user friendly for anyone wishing to find out more about the registration process.

This issue of Register News contains the latest developments in engineer and technician registration, plus coverage of the wider activities of EC^{UK} and some of our partners, both at home and internationally. It also contains news and views on more general issues that are likely to be of interest to registrants, educators and institution staff.

As always, we welcome feedback from our readers. If you have any comments or suggestions about the format or content of Register News please contact our new editor Sue Brough on sbrough@engc.org.uk.

Andrew Ramsay, CEO, Engineering Council UK

ENGTech NUMBERS GROW AGAIN

EngTech
 EXCELLENCE AS STANDARD

The number of individuals registering with EC^{UK} as Engineering Technician (EngTech) during 2008 has risen for the fourth consecutive year. The new influx of registrants brings the total number of current EngTech registrants to 13,711, representing an increase of 1,343 since the beginning of the year. And more than half of this intake for 2008 came through three institutions: SOE, InstRE and CIPHE.

For the third year running, SOE (the Society of Operations Engineers) was responsible for the registration of a large percentage of EngTechs. Chief Executive Nick Jones believes that this achievement is due to the Society's commitment to developing apprentices into competent and skilled engineers, saying, "SOE prides itself on nourishing the careers of engineering professionals. From the workshop to the boardroom, SOE members' achievement in attaining EngTech and IEng status is a tribute to their professionalism. We firmly believe that apprentices and technicians are crucial to the success of the engineering profession. By supporting this vital element within engineering, SOE is promoting a future that can rise to the many challenges we face as an industry."

Since 2007, when it gained its licence to assess members for the EngTech award, the InstRE (Institution of Royal Engineers) has also registered a significant number of EngTechs and anticipates that it will more than double the number of registrants by the end of this year. At the same time, the institution is itself working towards becoming licensed by EC^{UK} to award CEng and IEng, which it hopes to achieve next year.

Lt Col David Hamilton, Secretary of the InstRE attributes its high number of EngTech registrants to briefing programmes the institution has extended to units both at home, Afghanistan and in Iraq, during which the benefits of registration have been clearly welcomed. He says, "EngTech offers a qualification which is transferable between the army and civilian life, differentiating registrants as skilled professionals in the world of engineering and technology."

At CIPHE (The Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering), where many members are self-employed, designatory letters are seen as extremely beneficial, particularly for enhancing professional recognition. Lesley Challis, Membership Secretary, says that CIPHE has been encouraging its members to check their current experience and qualifications, as in many cases they have been unaware of already being suitably qualified for registration.

This has resulted in many of their members proceeding quickly and easily through the registration process in order to enjoy the benefits of EngTech.

The upward trend in female EngTech registration also continues, with a steady increase showing over the past four years. In addition, for the second year in a row over 11% of new Chartered Engineers are women, a figure which has risen from 9.2% in 2004.

IENG PIVOTAL TO REGISTRATION STRUCTURE



EXCELLENCE AS STANDARD

As discussed previously in Register News, the new UK-SPEC launched in November was largely a result of ECUK's review of the Incorporated Engineer (IEng) category of registration.

The review was carried out due to the decline in the number of new IEng registrations, and the considerable uncertainty within the profession about what it meant to be an Incorporated Engineer in the twenty-first century. All aspects of IEng registration were covered, including the fundamental questions – is there still a place for IEng, and do we need three registration categories? What is the relationship between Incorporated Engineer and Chartered Engineer, and what are the differences between them? It also looked again at the perennial question – is Incorporated Engineer an appropriate title? In looking at these issues, the group sought the views of professional engineering institutions, employers, the education community and, when possible, of engineers themselves.

There was general agreement that a registration structure comprising three categories reflected the realities of engineers' employment and career development. A single category which embraced both Incorporated and Chartered Engineers would create uncertainty about the status of the qualification and might also cause difficulties for international recognition, since most of our partners in international agreements have professional structures similar to ours. Simply to do away with IEng registration, on the other hand, would take away from a large number of engineers the opportunity to gain professional recognition.

After careful consideration the review group recommended the retention of the title Incorporated Engineer. Many of those consulted expressed the view that clear positioning and effective promotion would make more difference to the success of this registration category than any change to the title.

The three categories, EngTech, IEng and CEng, in that order, are presented in the new UK-SPEC as part of a progressive registration structure. This reflects the recognition that we live in a world where lifelong learning and career development are the norm, and will remain so whatever the short-term economic situation may be.

In recent years there has been a welcome growth in EngTech registration. While for many this represents recognition of the competence they have developed during the course of their working lives, significant numbers are also attaining registration after completing recognised apprenticeships or other training programmes. They will have reasonable expectations of developing their competence further, and will wish to see a professional structure that recognises this, by offering them the opportunity to seek IEng registration at an appropriate time.

For many graduates, the first part of their career will involve the development of knowledge and skills which equate to those required for IEng registration. ECUK hopes that the new Standard will encourage them to seek registration at IEng level, while at the same time offering them the opportunity to progress to CEng through career development.

Offering the possibility of IEng registration should encourage many graduates to engage with the profession earlier than they might otherwise have done. At the same time, ECUK is keen that those who are the traditional IEng cohort, who have a solid practical experience in industry, seek recognition through what should be a pivotal category in the registration structure.

FAIR ACCESS TO THE PROFESSIONS

Towards the end of January the Government published its New Opportunities White Paper. One of the initiatives announced was the establishment of a Panel on Fair Access to the Professions. Chaired by Alan Milburn MP, the Panel will look at the processes and structures that govern recruitment into key professions. It will identify actions that the professions, supported by government where relevant, could undertake to improve access.

Engineering is represented on the Panel by Lord Browne, President of the Royal Academy of Engineering. Terms of reference and membership can be seen at: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/accessprofessions.

ECUK has already contributed, with ETB, to a briefing for Lord Browne, focusing particularly on the various pathways to registration available under UK-SPEC, and mentioning the MSc in Professional Engineering developed through the Gateways to the Professions project. ECUK has now been invited to submit further evidence to the Panel.

The Panel has been established alongside the Gateways to the Professions Collaborative Forum, established by the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills and of which ECUK is a member.

TALKING TO STUDENTS

As part of ECUK's marketing registration campaign, university and college visits carried out by professional engineering institutions have been observed, resulting in a list of best practices being drawn up. The list includes techniques and practices that appear particularly effective in explaining to young audiences the benefits and value of both professional engineering institution membership as well as registration.

This best practice list is being shared with regional and central office staff of engineering institutions in an effort to increase the effectiveness of these activities. The successful communication to student engineers appears to be a major contributor in their decision making process regarding eventual registration. By contrast, engineers who first encounter information regarding registration in the workplace seem to be far less likely to become registered.

Presentations to students by the professional engineering institutions are key, in that they provide an opportunity to offer recognition to the students for their chosen course in engineering, and to highlight the benefits of remaining in what is generally an interesting and rewarding career. In this way, students can be encouraged to stay in an engineering stream after the conclusion of their course. More importantly, they can be better informed about the kind of issues they might face in their working life, particularly during the early years, and how registration aligned with membership of an institution can be of substantial benefit.

Some of these best practices are fairly straight forward, such as explaining the status and prestige of having post nominal letters. Others are more practical, for example standardising materials and messages across regions, but having different sets of messages for first year and final year students.

Feedback from the institutions has been positive so far, with six out of six regional representatives questioned agreeing that the best practice list was both interesting and useful.

The latest versions of both the best practice list and the marketing registration toolkit are now available on the ECUK Extranet under Registration/Marketing, or:

<http://www.engc.org.uk/engcextra/docList.aspx?folder=Registration/Marketing>.

In addition, brochures can be downloaded from the marketing registration campaign website: **www.theNextStep.org.uk** and hard copies of brochures and posters are available from **info@engc.org.uk**.

ECUK WORKSHOP UPDATE

Since 2005 ECUK has been running a workshop programme primarily offering learning and development for institution staff and members, but also providing an opportunity for cross institution networking and sharing of good practice.

By the end of 2008, more than 330 people had attended 25 workshops covering eight subjects: Interviewing for Registration; Technical Report Option; Further Learning; Mentoring and Assessment of Work based programme; Self Assessment; KPIs; the Benefits of ISO9001; and Mentoring for Registration.

To ensure the suitability of programmes being delivered and to check that expectations were being met, ECUK has carried out a survey amongst delegates. The positive response received was extremely encouraging and has resulted in eleven workshops being planned for 2009, with a number of new topics being introduced, including Marketing Registration and New Approach to Licensing.

For further details please contact Tammy Simmons on **tsimmons@engc.org.uk**.

WORK-BASED MSC FEASIBILITY STUDY

ECUK has just secured funding from the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 to carry out a feasibility study with employers for the development of a research-focused, work-based Masters degree in Professional Engineering. Successful completion of the degree would provide candidates with eligibility to apply for a chartered professional review for CEng status.

A model for the degree programme, which integrates learning with professional development, has been developed by ECUK as part of the DIUS Gateways to the Professions project. Expected to be attractive to BEng graduates who may not otherwise seek registration, the programme reduces the time taken to achieve professional registration, leading to the increased competitiveness of UK engineering.

The study is a product of ECUK and the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851 sharing a common interest in ensuring that the UK has sufficient well qualified engineers. It will explore the level of support amongst employers for a variant of the model, which incorporates significant Masters level research that would provide value to their company. It will be conducted over a period of four months, involving a sample of UK-based companies from a range of engineering sectors, who employ BEng graduates. The lead contact for this work at ECUK is Deborah Seddon, Deputy Director of Formation, email **dseddon@engc.org.uk**.

FEANI – OBJECTIVES FOR 2010

Early in the New Year the FEANI Board, including Jim Birch, EC^{UK}'s Head of International Recognition, met for an intensive two day session during which it established the 2009-2012 strategic plan. The outcome was a set of objectives, their means of delivery and measurements of their success. Over the next three years FEANI will be concentrating its efforts into five areas:

- Education and professional development of engineers
- Mobility of engineers and graduates
- Providing an "engineers voice" on relevant societal issues
- Promotion of professional standards and ethics
- Providing a European perspective at international meetings

GLOBAL COOPERATION

In his role as Chair of the International Engineering Alliance, EC^{UK} Board member David Long recently met Maria Prieto-Laffargue, President-Elect of the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO), to discuss mutual cooperation. The exchange of information and views established that the work of the two federations was complementary and there was no overlap of effort.

David Long supported the recommendations made in a WFEO discussion paper that WFEO's role in matters relating to accreditation and mobility recognition should be to facilitate and publicise, particularly to the UN and WTO, the work of other specialist bodies, such as the International Engineering Alliance. Maria Prieto-Laffargue welcomed his comments and the offer of IEA support in implementing this policy.

RANKING UNIVERSITIES

At the EU Business-Industry Forum in Brussels the EU Commission representative made a number of references to an initiative aimed at developing a European system for ranking universities around the world. Funding is in place and project proposals to design and pilot a system are being solicited; the pilot to be in the disciplines of engineering and business studies.

While having reservations about the value and the accuracy of university ranking systems, the FEANI Board has decided that, as it is clear that the initiative will go ahead come what may, engineers need to be involved. As a result, it has joined one of the consortia which is making a bid for the project funding.

IET GAINS FIRST ICTTECH LICENCE

Following the launch of the new ICT*Tech* qualification, the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) has become the first professional institution to be licensed by EC^{UK} to offer ICT*Tech* registration to its members. The milestone was celebrated at a launch event on 30 January at the IET's London home, Savoy Place.

The ICT*Tech* standard allows practitioners to work towards a recognised qualification, marked by post nominals. It is designed to cover a range of jobs which involve facilitating or supporting the use of ICT equipment and applications by others. ICT Technicians work in areas such as ICT hardware, software or system installation, operation, maintenance, change/problem management, administration, security, fault diagnosis and fixing.

The first new registration category on the Engineering Council Register for nearly 35 years, ICT*Tech* responds to industry demand for a competence-based professional qualification for the vast array of IT and communications technicians who support and maintain the systems on which nearly every business and organisation in the UK depends.



EC^{UK} Chairman, Kel Fidler (right) presented Chris Earnshaw, IET President with the licence at Savoy Place.

It will help employers to identify ICT practitioners who hold the soft skills they need while recognising the underpinning technical experience. In addition, it will strengthen professionalism and ethical practice in an important sector of employment.

Believing in continuous professional development as the crux of a progressive workforce and, therefore, a healthy economy, the IET was instrumental in developing the ICTTech qualification.

The British Computer Society (BCS) is the second institution to apply to ECUK for a licence to assess applicants for ICT Technician registration.

Further information on ICTTech can be found at: www.icctech.org.uk.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR ITP MEMBERS

A new partnership has been formed between the Institute of Telecommunications Professionals (ITP) and the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) to create a joint professional registration programme to raise professional standards across the telecoms sector.

This joint ITP-IET member registration agreement means that members of the ITP can apply for ECUK professional registration, using the IET. ITP programme members will be entitled to use the designatory letters CEng, IEng, EngTech or ICTTech after their name once they are awarded registration.

ITP CEO Brendan O'Mahony commented, "Responses from our online survey and discussions with our corporate members, revealed an extremely positive response about the benefits of being professionally recognised for their skills and experience. Thus I am delighted that ITP members now have the opportunity to be awarded registrations through this new ITP service."

Robin McGill, IET chief executive, said, "Increasingly, the IET is forming partnerships with other institutions as part of a collaborative approach to raising professional standards across the industry worldwide."

"This agreement allows us to complement the offering to ITP members and provide them with professional registration that has not been available in the past, boosting their professional competence and the professionalism of the industry."



ITP CEO Brendan O'Mahony (left) and Robin McGill, IET CEO

Andrew Ramsay, Chief Executive Officer of ECUK, welcomed the announcement, stating, "We are pleased to see the IET providing registration support to the ITP through this agreement. This should enable the ITP to offer an even wider spectrum of services to its members."

The ITP-IET Professional Registration programme is expected to be available to members in April.

UNIVERSITY APPLICATIONS ON THE INCREASE

The latest figures from UCAS show a continued rise in the number of UK university applications for undergraduate degrees, with engineering and technology showing an unprecedented 13.3% increase on last year's applications. Mechanical engineering has achieved close to a 20% rise, while civil engineering has seen an increase of almost 10%. After a long period of decline electrical and electronic engineering applications have reached a turning point and risen by 6%, while computing, another relatively unpopular subject over recent years, is beating the average with 8.6%.

Many of these figures compare favorably with overall applications for entry this coming September. The 7% rise on last year is fuelling speculation that individuals becoming unemployed during the current economic climate, or with poor career prospects are seeking the opportunity to better themselves in readiness for the end of the recession.

The pronounced increase in mature applications across the UK would appear to add to this assumption, with the 21-24 age group showing a rise of 12.9% and an increase of 12.6% from applicants over the age of 24.

For further information click on: http://www.ucas.ac.uk/website/news/media_releases/2009/2009-02-16

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE FOR THE ETB



At the beginning of January, ETB staff and Trustees gave a warm welcome to new Chief Executive Paul Jackson, CEng FIET. Originally trained as an electrical engineer, Paul has since held a variety of senior commercial, technological and communications roles encompassing contract R&D, the media and charity sectors, and has served as a borough councillor.

After a series of posts within United Business Media, Paul moved to the Institution of Electrical Engineers, now the Institution of Engineering and Technology, later becoming Director of Professional Operations, before establishing strategic management company Jasia.

Taking up his position at the ETB, Paul said:

"I am really pleased to be given this opportunity at such a crucial time. The credit crunch has really sharpened the focus on the need to build foundations for future economic success. Engineering and technology will underpin that success, from innovation in manufacturing to information technology in banking. We will be keeping the public in touch with that contribution and encouraging young people to take part in their future careers."

On behalf of EC^{UK}, Andrew Ramsay comments, "I welcome Paul's appointment, which is already leading to a strengthened relationship between EC^{UK} and the ETB. I look forward to further supporting and reinforcing the activities of ETB, while developing the contribution ETB can make to our regulatory work."

For information and contact details for Paul and other Key ETB staff, please visit: http://www.etechnology.co.uk/about_us/key_individuals.cfm

MAKING A BIG BANG

The inaugural UK Young Scientists & Engineers Fair, The Big Bang, took place from 4-6 March at the QE11 Centre in London, to celebrate and raise the profile of young people's innovation and achievement in science and engineering. Bringing together nearly 50 organisations from the STEM community, The Big Bang was project managed by the Engineering and Technology Board.

Over the three days, 5,000 young people and a further 1,500 teachers, politicians, exhibitors, sponsors and members of the science and engineering community witnessed the UK's biggest celebration of science and engineering.

Sir Anthony Cleaver, Co-patron of The Big Bang, said: "The Big Bang lived up to its name. To have been able to give nearly 5,000 young people the opportunity to look at science and engineering with fresh eyes and explore the exciting opportunities on offer in the sector, is a tremendous achievement. I thank the nearly fifty organisations from the public and private sectors for coming together to give so many young people a boost towards something that might just change their lives."

The Big Bang will be an annual event and plans are already underway for next year when it will take place in Manchester. Details of The Big Bang 2010 will be available soon at <http://www.thebigbangfair.co.uk>.

ROLE MODEL SEARCH

As part of its website update EC^{UK} is looking for new role models. Anyone registered as CEng, IEng or EngTech who would be willing to share their own story, specifically about their career so far and what registration means for them, should contact sbrough@engc.org.uk.

Current case studies can be seen on http://www.engc.org.uk/registration/Case_Studies/Default.aspx

NON-MEMBER SURVEY

To help understand the concerns and motivation of engineers who are not currently registered as EngTech, IEng or CEng, EC^{UK} is conducting an on-line survey on attitudes and awareness of registration. An overview of the survey results will be reported in a future issue of Register News.

If you have colleagues who are practising engineers or technicians, but not yet registered, please assist us in gathering this important information by encouraging them to complete the survey. It takes no more than five minutes and can be accessed at the following address: <http://tinyurl.com/notregistered>.

CURRENT VACANCIES

Education 5-19 Manager – The IET

This is a great opportunity to head the IET's Education Team with accountability for the strategy to engage 5-19 students and their teachers in engineering related subjects. You will be responsible for devising and managing the strategic development of IET Education policy and the implementation and delivery of a strong sustainable vision.

Duties will include management of Education 5-19 staff including their career and educational activities and motivation; preparation of business plans and budgets and reporting performance against targets to agreed timescales; Initiation and development of strategic partnerships at National level; Planning, developing and managing complex programmes at strategic and operational level and developing relevant curriculum resources and professional development in partnership with other bodies.

A job description can be found at www.theiet.org/about/jobs-at/vacancies. For informal enquiries please contact Michelle Richmond on 01438 765692 or e-mail mrichmond@theiet.org. Closing date for applications is Friday 27 March 2009.

Research Manager – The ETB

The Engineering and Technology Board (ETB) is currently looking for a Research Manager to provide specialist research expertise services to support its key projects and activities, and provide reliable and accurate statistical information that assists its decision making. Further details can be obtained from bfalkenau@etechb.co.uk.

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