



Risk-based approach to accreditation visits – policy information for education and apprenticeship providers

Introduction

1. The Engineering Council introduced a 'risk-based approach to accreditation' for accreditation visits taking place after 1 January 2023. This relates to accreditation of programmes by PEIs against [Approval and Accreditation of Qualifications and Apprenticeships \(AAQA\)](#) or [Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes \(AHEP\)](#)
2. This document summarises the policy for education and apprenticeship providers, with more detailed information available to licensed Professional Engineering Institution(s), hereafter referred to as PEI(s), on the Partner Portal.

Summary of policy

3. The risk-based approach permits some accreditation activity to be completed through a virtual visit or a hybrid visit (involving some in-person and some virtual activity), at the discretion of the PEI(s). In the context of this policy a 'visit' refers to visit activity whether conducted in-person (on site), entirely virtually (with no in-person element) or through a hybrid approach (with a mix of virtual and in-person activity).
4. In some circumstances a visit containing a significant in-person element is mandatory.
5. Individual PEIs may decide to complete all or a majority of their accreditation activity in-person.
6. PEIs must decide and confirm to all participants whether a visit will be in-person, virtual or hybrid at least six weeks in advance of a visit.
7. Accreditation of a qualification or programme confirms that its delivery is recognised at a specific site or sites. Each location for which programme accreditation is sought must be subject to a visit, even where the programme is identical.

Changes to programmes between the normal cycle of visits

8. It is a condition of accreditation that providers inform PEIs of major changes during the period of accreditation that might affect the delivery of the specified programme outcomes (this includes temporary changes for example due to strike action or a pandemic). A visit is required to confirm continuation of accreditation to programmes that have undergone a major change in between the normal cycle of accreditation visits.
9. Providers must also inform PEIs of any changes to titles of accredited programmes so that records on the Engineering Council [course search database](#) can be updated.