

Approval and Accreditation of Qualifications and Apprenticeships (AAQA)

Toolkit for users of the AAQA Standard (introductory document)

1. Context

Some Professional Engineering Institutions (PEIs) have an Engineering Council (EngC) Licence to approve and accredit qualifications and apprenticeships under the auspices of the AHEP and AAQA Standards. Whilst there is much experience of the accreditation of academic university programmes, the processes for approving and accrediting the more vocational and work-based programmes are less well developed and in many cases, PEIs and other stakeholders need guidance and support to help them apply the AAQA standard.

You will find the [AAQA Standard and Guidance Note](#) on our dedicated webpage. There is a page dedicated to the AAQA Standard on the EngC website at:

The **Guidance Note** has been written with the needs of the various audiences in mind and includes sections on:

- Introducing AAQA
- The role of the employer and benefits/impact of recognition
- The role of the Delivery Provider and benefits/impact of recognition
- The role of the Professional Engineering Institutions (PEIs)
- The role of public and regulatory bodies

This toolkit has been compiled to support all stakeholders in their use of the AAQA Standard.

This toolkit has been designed to offer users a logical approach to using the AAQA Standard with the contents sequenced accordingly. It will refer to a series of documents and forms which can be accessed and used as appropriate.

2. Summary Contents of Toolkit

Tool	Purpose
AAQA Quick Guide	This provides answers to some of the frequently asked questions. It includes the key value proposition for AAQA. Information herein can be used by PEIs in promotional materials and on websites.
Initial Submission Form (template)	This form collects key information about the organisation and programme(s) seeking approval or accreditation. The PEI will use it to decide the next steps for approval or accreditation.
Full Submission Form for Approval (template)	This form collects detailed information about the programme(s) being approved including the format of the programme(s), delivery, resource and quality assurance arrangements. This form will mostly likely be completed by the Assessment Organisation responsible for the programme(s) being approved.
Full Submission Form for Accreditation (template)	This form makes an initial check as to whether accreditation the most appropriate course of action and the collects detailed information about the programme(s) being approved including the format of the programme(s), delivery, resource and quality assurance arrangements. This form will mostly likely be completed by the Assessment Organisation responsible for the programme(s) being accredited.
Output Standards and Competence Matrix - Levels 3 -7 (template)	This is a spreadsheet which is used to map the contents of the programme against the various Learning Outcomes and/or Competences required for a programme to be approved or accredited as meeting the EngC requirements for professional registration. Each programme will need a separate matrix to be completed. This form will mostly likely be completed by the Assessment Organisation responsible for the programme(s) being approved or accredited.
Guidance for use with Output Standards and Competence Matrix - Levels 3 - 7 – (template)	This is a guidance note on how to complete the Output Standards and Competence Matrix.

The purpose of these submission and matrix documents is to provide templates that PEIs can use or adapt to ask awarding organisations or providers for information in advance of an approval activity or accreditation visit. As such, the audience for the submission documents and matrices is PEIs. Wider stakeholders are advised that whilst these are indicative of the information they will need to supply, they should contact PEIs for their individual submission docs.

3. Detailed Contents

This toolkit contains the following tools.

3.1. AQAA Quick guide, value proposition and some frequently asked questions.

This document covers the following questions:

- What is meant by approval and accreditation?
- What is meant by qualifications and apprenticeships?
- Who benefits from approved or accredited qualification and apprenticeships?
- Who is responsible for carrying out approval and accreditation?
- How do I get my qualification or apprenticeship approved or accredited?
- What does approval and accreditation by a PEI involve?
- Why are not all qualifications and apprenticeships approved or accredited?
- How do you differentiate between AAQA and AHEP?
- How can we raise awareness for graduates around accreditation?

The audience for this document is all stakeholders including PEIs, providers, assessment organisations, employers and government agencies.

3.2. INITIAL SUBMISSION FORM – Template for recognition against AAQA

This form is designed as a template that PEIs can issue or adapt to collect the initial information about the organisation leading on the request for approval or accreditation, brief details about the programme(s) being considered, general information on the programme including estimations of potential volumes and throughputs. In addition, it reviews any prior approvals or accreditation. Contents include:

- Contact information
- Confirmation on the type of recognition sought (approval or accreditation)
- Programme details/specifications/standards
- Previous approval/accreditation activity

3.3. FULL SUBMISSION FORM for Approval against AAQA Standard

This form is designed as a template that PEIs can issue or adapt to collect the detailed information about the programme(s) being subject to approval. This information will allow the PEIs conducting approval to have all the information needed to support the approval decision. As well as details about the structure of the programme, there will be information on delivery arrangements, resources and quality assurance. Contents include:

SECTION A	Generic Information
A1	Contact Details
A2	Proposed Professional Engineering Institution(s)
A3	Summary Programmes for Approval
A4	Previous Approval (if applicable)
SECTION B	Programme Information
B2	Qualification or Apprenticeship Standard/Specification.
B2	Qualification or Apprenticeship Assessment Plan (if applicable).

B3	Mapping of the Qualification or Apprenticeship against relevant EngC Learning Outcomes.
B4	Mapping of the Qualification or Apprenticeship against relevant UK-SPEC Competences.

SECTION C	Programme Delivery and Assessment Arrangements
C1	Typical delivery arrangements for the Qualification or Apprenticeship
C2	Overview of Assessment Process
C3	Description of the different assessment methods
C4	Examples of Assessment
C5	Learner/apprentices/candidate support arrangements
C6	Employer involvement in delivery and assessment.

SECTION D	Resources Requirements
D1	Expected human resource requirements
D2	Expected physical resource requirements
D3	Expected guidance and support requirements

SECTION E	Quality Assurance
E1	Internal quality assurance requirements
E2	External quality assurance requirements
E3	Details of national oversight of qualification or apprenticeship

3.4. FULL SUBMISSION FORM for Accreditation against AAQA Standard

This form is designed as a template that PEIs can issue or adapt to collect the detailed information about the programme(s) being subject to accreditation. This information will allow the PEIs conducting accreditation to have all the information needed to support the approval decision. As well as details about the structure of the programme, there will be information on delivery arrangements, resources and quality assurance.

Contents include:

SECTION A	Generic Information
A1	Contact Details
A2	Proposed Professional Engineering Institution(s)
A3	Summary Programmes for Accreditation
A4	Previous Accreditation (if applicable)
SECTION B	Programme Information
B2	Qualification or Apprenticeship Standard/Specification.
B2	Qualification or Apprenticeship Assessment Plan (if applicable).
B3	Mapping of the Qualification or Apprenticeship against relevant EngC Learning Outcomes.
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SECTION C	Programme Delivery and Assessment Arrangements
C1	Typical delivery arrangements for the Qualification or Apprenticeship
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SECTION D	Resources Requirements
D1	Expected human resource requirements
D2	Expected physical resource requirements
D3	Expected guidance and support requirements
SECTION E	Quality Assurance
E1	Quality assurance requirements at Delivery Level
E2	Quality assurance requirements at Institutional Level
E3	Details of High-Level National Oversight of qualification or apprenticeship

3.5. Output Standards and Competence Matrix - Levels 3 - 7

This is a spreadsheet with a series of tabs for the various levels of learning outcomes and competences. It has been designed as a template that PEIs can issue or adapt to be used with most qualifications and apprenticeships which will be subject to approval. It is used to:

- Help map the contents of apprenticeships, qualifications and programmes against the Learning Outcomes and Competence required for professional registration at EngTech, beyond EngTech and towards Incorporated Engineer.
- Show the extent to which output assessment used on the qualification or apprenticeship (knowledge, skills and behaviours) provides sufficient depth and coverage. If it does, and following proper peer review, this will allow full or part recognition and the apprenticeship, qualification or programme can then be listed on the Engineering Council database of qualifications as approved under the auspices of AAQA.

If possible, it should be used at the design stage as a means of ensuring there is full coverage of the AAQA Learning Outcomes and UK-SPEC Competences. If the qualification or apprenticeship is already up and running, it can be used to retrospectively map the content and if approved through a process of peer review, will allow those people graduating from these programmes to apply through the “recognised qualification” route.

3.6 Guidance for use with Output Standards and Competence Matrix - Levels 3 - 7

In addition, those completing the spreadsheet should refer to the Defining Characteristics and Learning Outcomes table which can be downloaded from either the AAQA webpage www.engc.org.uk/aaqa or the AHEP webpage www.engc.org.uk/ahep, the competence statements in AAQA, or the contextualised learning outcomes or competence statements issued by the PEI that will be considering programme recognition.

The learning outcomes are taken from AAQA and AHEP, part of the Standard used by the UK engineering profession to assess the competence and commitment of individual engineers and technicians for professional registration. This Standard was developed collaboratively, in consultation with engineers representing the breadth of the profession, from industry, academia and many different disciplines and specialisms.