



ENGINEERS  
AUSTRALIA

# Accreditation Information Guide for EA Volunteers

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Providing information to EA Volunteers, Division Committees,  
College Boards and potential Discipline Experts.

# Accreditation Overview

Accreditation is the evaluation of an education program offered by an education provider to determine the extent to which the program produces graduates with capabilities required for entry to engineering practice at the level of Engineering Associate, Engineering Technologist or Professional Engineer. Accreditation is voluntary, is requested by the education provider, and is conducted in accordance with the accreditation policy and procedures of Engineers Australia. Programs may be submitted for accreditation by education providers in either the public or private sector.

Engineers Australia is the recognised professional accreditation body for Australian engineering education programs. Accredited Australian engineering programs are internationally recognised through international educational accords and mobility agreements. These accords and agreements set the international benchmark for education programs and competencies for independent practice. They facilitate international recognition and global mobility for Australian graduates and members of Engineers Australia.

Engineers Australia has full signatory status for all three Education Accords of the International Engineering Alliance (IEA): Washington Accord (Professional Engineer), Sydney Accord (Engineering Technologist) and Dublin Accord (Engineering Associate).

## Objectives of Accreditation Reviews:

- To determine, with **reasonable confidence**, the extent to which the Higher Education (HE) program or Vocational Education and Training (VET) competency program is capable of producing graduates with capabilities specified by the Engineers Australia Stage 1 Competencies.
- To determine with **reasonable confidence**, the extent to which graduate cohorts indeed possess the capabilities specified in the Stage 1 Competencies
- To determine with **reasonable confidence** that a HE or VET program satisfying a) and b) will continue to produce the graduate capabilities throughout the accreditation period.

*Accreditation applies to Engineering Programs, not Individuals or Universities.*

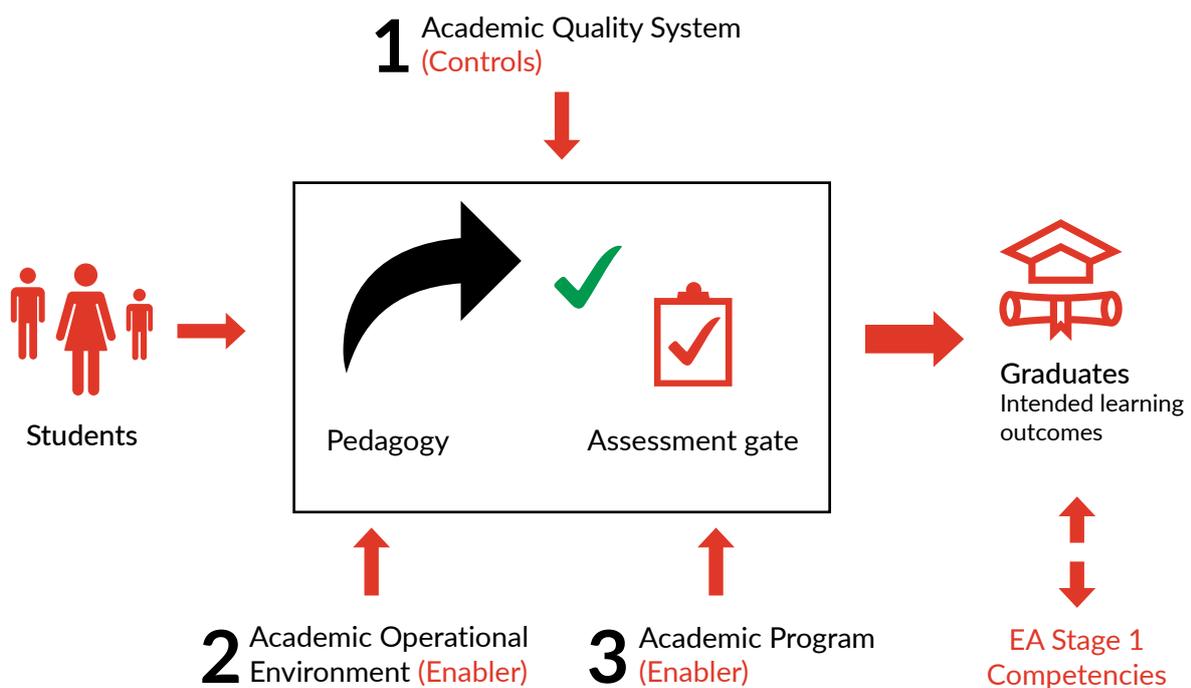


# Accreditation Criteria

- The Accreditation Standard, comprising the Accreditation Criteria, defines the threshold measures that an education program must achieve to be accorded accreditation.
- Each Accreditation Criterion must be individually achieved for the Accreditation Standard to be met.
- The Accreditation Criteria invoke the EA Stage 1 Competency Standards, that is, statements of assessable graduate attributes and outcomes.
- Evaluation panels must have working familiarity with the accreditation standards for both HE and VET programs: AMS-STD-10 (HE) and AMS-STD-20 (VET)  
<https://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/About-Us/Accreditation/AMS-2019>

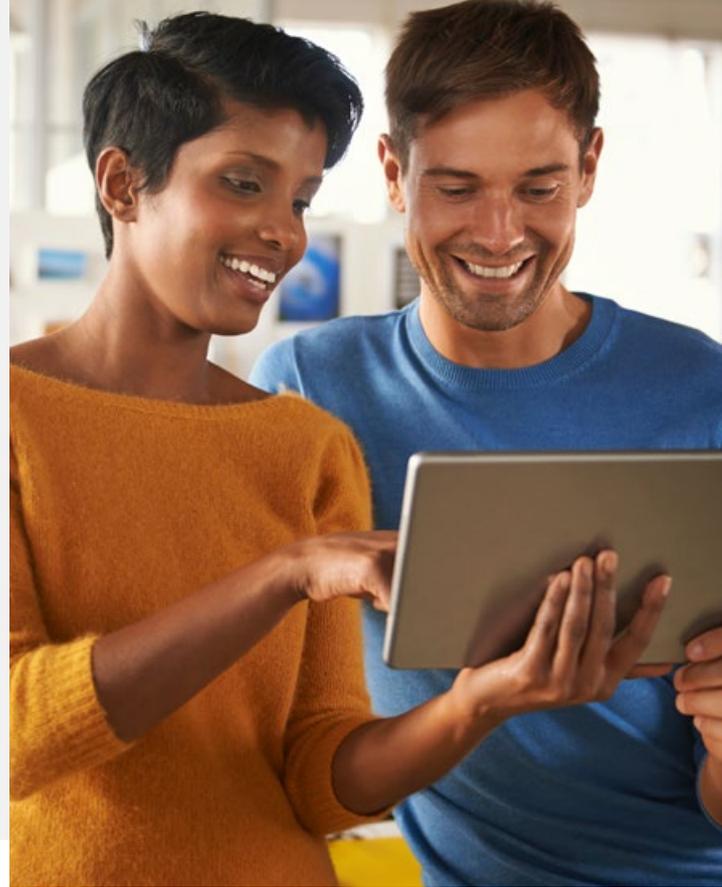
The Accreditation Criteria are categorised into three areas:

1. Quality system
2. Operational environment
3. Academic Programs



# Accreditation Process

The accreditation process is designed to maintain the internationally benchmarked standards (the Engineers Australia Stage 1 Competencies) and promote best practice, innovation and diversity in engineering education. An accredited engineering education program is evaluated as providing the necessary preparation for graduates to enter the profession in the relevant career occupation category of Professional Engineering, Engineer Technologist or Engineering Associate.



## There are Four Steps in Engineers Australia's Accreditation Process

### Step 1: Self-Evaluation by the Education Provider

The Education Provider requests accreditation of its programs and prepares a self-study report providing evidence that the accreditation criteria are being met by its programs. Engineers Australia establishes an evaluation panel of discipline experts to independently assess the request and evidence. The self-study report is submitted to the evaluation panel for consideration.

### Step 2: Preliminary Assessment by Evaluation Panel

A preliminary assessment by the panel to consider the education provider's self-study submission in detail is held five weeks prior to the accreditation visit. The provider is advised of concerns and/or additional information requests.

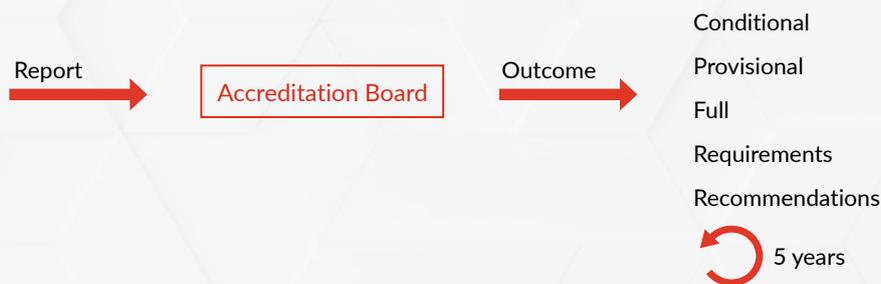
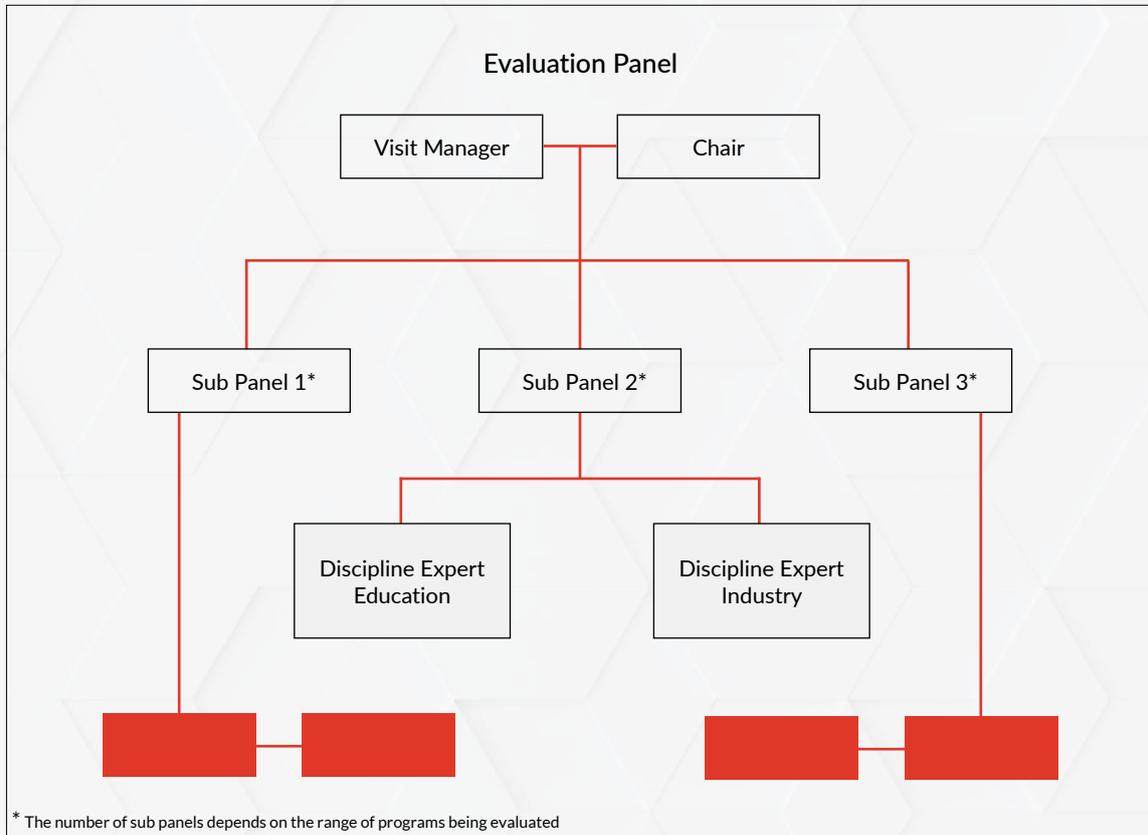
### Step 3: Accreditation Site Visit

The panel visits the campus of the education provider to assess objective evidence. The panel prepares a report for the Accreditation Board with recommendations on accreditation for each program under consideration. Templates are provided to guide the evaluation against the accreditation criteria and a peer review is undertaken.

### Step 4: Review by the Accreditation Board

The Accreditation Board considers the panel's report and is the decision making authority. The Accreditation Board also has a moderation role in reviewing all reports to ensure equivalency of outcomes across the sector.

# Evaluation Panel



## Available Accreditation Outcomes

Accreditation may be recommended as provisional or full accreditation; and both accreditations may be conditional or require the provider to reach specified mandatory requirements. Accreditation evaluation reports also contain recommendations for improvement to support education providers to further develop and enhance their programs. Accreditation is accorded for a maximum of 5 years.

**Full accreditation** can only be recommended once graduates outcomes are confirmed

**Provisional accreditation** is accorded in the early stages of program implementation, before a representative sample of graduates have emerged.

**Conditional accreditation** indicates a requirement has been identified and needs to be addressed usually within six to twelve months for accreditation to continue.



## How do we engage our volunteers?

The goal of accreditation is to provide assurance that a program is suitably designed and delivered to prepare graduates for **entry to professional practice** in a specified field with the appropriate level of competency. Feedback from accreditation panels also enables universities to further develop and improve their programs to better meet the needs of student engineers - and the profession.

Our volunteer accreditation evaluation panel members report a sense of satisfaction in helping to ensure future engineers will enter the workforce with the skills and knowledge they need. Panel members are also referred to as discipline experts (DEs).

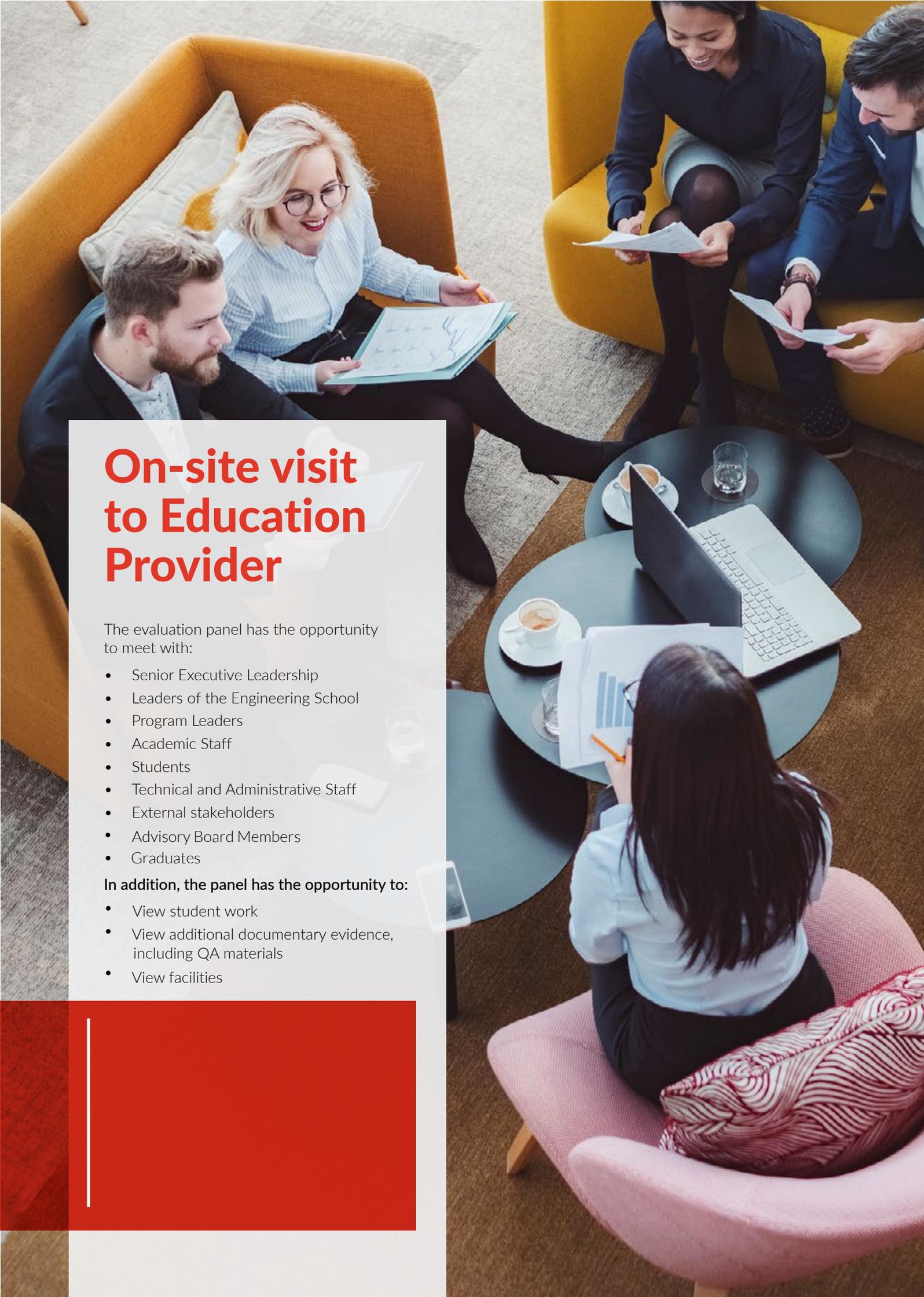
### Volunteers are drawn from both industry and academia and need to:

- Undertake Discipline Expert Training.
- Read the education provider's submission documentation.
- Prepare an initial evaluation of the submission documentation.
- Participate in a site visit including inspecting the facilities.
- Meeting with university staff, graduates and students.

*The Australian Engineering Accreditation Centre (AEAC) is always seeking more volunteers who are interested in accreditation.*

*Potential volunteers can register their interest by completing our online expression of interest that can be requested from the AEAC.*

*Accreditation panel volunteers are also referred to as discipline experts and are added to our discipline expert pool.*



# On-site visit to Education Provider

The evaluation panel has the opportunity to meet with:

- Senior Executive Leadership
- Leaders of the Engineering School
- Program Leaders
- Academic Staff
- Students
- Technical and Administrative Staff
- External stakeholders
- Advisory Board Members
- Graduates

**In addition, the panel has the opportunity to:**

- View student work
- View additional documentary evidence, including QA materials
- View facilities



# Benefits of Accreditation

## For Students and Graduates

- Assists students in their selection of education programs.
- Accreditation is a measure of institutional commitment.
- And a measure of professional acceptance.
- Helps ensure that graduates are adequately prepared for entry to professional practice.
- Affords automatic acceptance as Graduate Members of EA.
- Enhances employment opportunities.
- Affords international mobility under IEA Accords.

## To Education Providers

- Third party review and certification of programs.
- Recognition by the engineering profession.
- International recognition through IEA Accords.
- Drives continuous improvement.
- Marketing.

## Benefits to Employers

- Develops initial professional competencies for graduates.
- Provides a common baseline across education programs.
- Builds confidence in engineering education.
- Assists with recruitment.
- Assists in building a global workforce.

## For Engineers Australia

- Delivers on EA's commitment to develop a profession that merits the trust of the community.
- Contributes to delivering EA's vision as the trusted voice of the profession.
- Encourages graduates to commit to professional standards through membership.
- Encourages education providers to engage with Engineers Australia and the profession.
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- Encourages education providers to engage with Engineers Australia and the profession.
- Enables sharing of expertise and industry knowledge.
- Facilitates a better understanding of education programs and the university sector.
- Contributes to the development of the engineers entering the profession.
- Provides opportunities for members to volunteer and have this time recognised towards continuing professional development.

# What are our expectations of an accreditation panel member?

## Expectations for Panel Members

- Declare any potential conflicts of interest.
- Respect the strictest confidentiality in relation to documentation and information sighted prior to and during the visit.
- Maintain a focus on the 'big-picture', assured delivery of appropriate graduate outcomes, rather than fine curriculum detail.
- Balance consideration across the full range of accreditation criteria.
- Control personal preferences and parochial experiences.
- Understand current educational contexts, requirements or constraints.
- Make a holistic decision.
- Exercise professional judgement

## Pitfalls to avoid

- Unfamiliarity with the Provider's Self Study Report.
- Getting lost in detail and losing track of the purpose of evaluation.
- Telling anecdotes instead of probing.
- Dominating proceedings and meetings- failing to actively listen.
- Falling victim to opinion, bias or prejudice.
- Influenced by past 'baggage' and failing to keep an open mind.
- Jumping to conclusions on the basis of isolated messages, rather than triangulating data.
- Judging without evidence.
- Disrespectful behaviours.

The time commitment per review is dependent on the scope of the review and may vary between 1 day and 5 days in total.

Panels are selected using a range of criteria to achieve diversity across disciplines, accreditation experience, gender and employment history.

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# What is the role of TEQSA?

TEQSA was established under the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act) as the national regulator for the Australia's higher education sector. TEQSA's functions, which are set out in section 134 of the TEQSA Act, include registering higher education providers, accrediting higher education courses of study and conducting compliance assessments or quality assessments on matters relating to registered higher education providers or courses of study.

TEQSA ensures education providers comply with the Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards).

TEQSA registers education providers as self accrediting when the provider can demonstrate that they have robust governance structures, policy and processes. This is at the University level and applies to all programs.

Engineers Australia is responsible for the accreditation from a professional perspective and focuses on outcomes to enable graduates to be successful in industry. This accreditation is at the program level.

Professional accreditation is complementary to TEQSA accreditation.

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# Further Information

## Accreditation Centre

**Ms Bernadette Foley** BE(Hons) FIEAust CPEng EngExec NER APEC IntPE(Aus)  
General Manager, Professional Standards

For general enquiries on accreditation and expressions of interest as a Discipline Expert, please email [aeac@engineersaustralia.org.au](mailto:aeac@engineersaustralia.org.au)

For information on accredited programs, please view the list of accredited programs on our website at [engineersaustralia.org.au/About-Us/Accreditation](http://engineersaustralia.org.au/About-Us/Accreditation)

## General Information

For general enquiries on student and graduate membership with Engineers Australia, please visit the EA website:

[engineersaustralia.org.au](http://engineersaustralia.org.au)



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