



futures of
engineering
accreditation

Accreditation 101

Accreditation is a formal process of time-limited recognition granted by an external professional body, with the authority to verify that an educational institution or program meets specific predetermined standards of quality. The purposes of accreditation systems vary system-by-system but are usually linked to educational quality assurance for the programs, institutions, students, graduates, and/or profession. Accreditation is also a status.

Accreditation may be focused on educational inputs, processes, outputs, or any of these combined. Examples include staffing, program resources, and curricula design and content. Occasionally, it may address the teaching process, the quality of student support, and explore outcomes such as graduate competencies and employability.

The accreditation process typically involves the submission of a written report demonstrating how the institution or program seeking accreditation meets the established standards. The written documentation is normally complemented by discussions between reviewers and representatives of the institution or program, sometimes during site visits by the accreditation authority. The findings of this investigation are then typically considered by a decision-making body who determines the outcome of the assessment.

Engineering Accreditation in Canada

Through the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB), Engineers Canada accredits Canadian undergraduate programs in engineering. Graduates of an accredited program meet the academic requirements needed to become licensed with Canada's engineering regulators. Applicants for licensure who did not graduate from an accredited undergraduate engineering program must demonstrate to the regulators that they meet the academic requirements for licensure through individualized assessments. This can include exams, interviews, or additional training.

Engineering education accreditation is voluntary. An accreditation visit happens at the invitation of a particular program, where a visiting team will examine the academic and professional quality of the faculty, curriculum, laboratories, equipment and facilities, and the quality of the students' work.

About Futures of Engineering Education

The expectations of engineers are continually growing, and the accreditation of engineering education is increasingly crucial to their success. [Futures of Engineering Accreditation \(FEA\)](#) aims to gather diverse perspectives and consider how these insights can chart a new path for the future of accreditation. Through its multi-year journey, the project will:

- Conduct a fundamental review of the current accreditation system and re-examine its purpose in the context of the overall licensure system.
- Gather the different perspectives of the Canadian engineering ecosystem to shape future evolutions of accreditation to best meet society's needs.

If you have any questions about the project, or are interested in getting involved, please email fea@engineerscanada.ca. You can also sign up for our Accreditation Matters newsletter [here](#).

¹Institute for Credentialing Excellence (2020). Basic Guide to Credentialing Terminology and Institute for Credentialing Excellence 'What is Accreditation?' Downloaded March 2023. Available online at <https://www.credentialingexcellence.org/Accreditation/New-to-Accreditation/What-is-Accreditation>.

²Institute for Credentialing Excellence (2021). National Commission for Certifying Agencies' Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs. Available online at <https://www.credentialingexcellence.org/Accreditation/Earn-Accreditation/NCCA>.

³Harvey, L. (2004). 'The Power of Accreditation: Views of Academics' in Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 26(2), 207–223. Available online at <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080042000218267>.