

Transforming the engineering education process within the Australian context - five years of experience in developing and implementing an outcomes based approach to accreditation of engineering education programs.

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*The 1996 review of engineering education in Australia stimulated a transformation of the approach and the process driving the accreditation of engineering education programs. The review report – ‘Changing the Culture: Engineering Education into the Future’ advocated fundamental changes to the culture and processes of engineering education at the level of Professional Engineer. Its conclusions paralleled those of similar reviews undertaken in other countries since the early 1990’s. The report called for a focus on educational outcomes, and in particular a defined set of generic graduate attributes. Although these attributes emphasised the continuing importance of delivering strong underpinning skills and knowledge, technical competence and engineering application skills, there was a new emphasis on the development of personal and professional capabilities.*

*In progressing the recommendations of this 1996 review, Engineers Australia has established a new policy on accreditation; developed a comprehensive Accreditation Management System with criteria reflecting the directions prescribed in the 1996 review; and has published the Stage 1 Competency Standards as a framework for specifying graduate capability targets for any program of engineering education. These developments have contributed to the evolution of engineering education programs at the level of Professional Engineer and Engineering Technologist within our Australian engineering schools.*

*This presentation will discuss key influences, educational developments and initiatives that have been observed in the Australian context over the past 5 years and is based on the experiences of managing the accreditation system on behalf of Engineers Australia.*