

The UK has a rich engineering heritage and is home to many world-class engineering companies such as Rolls-Royce and BAE Systems. Recent engineering achievements include the development of Formula One racing cars, the building of the state-of-the-art Eurofighter Typhoon and the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. Exciting new engineering work will be undertaken for the 2012 Olympics.

The range of courses in the UK is huge. There are courses in civil, mechanical, electrical, electronic, aeronautical, chemical, and marine engineering. There are also qualifications in general engineering, although many will lead you to specialise to some extent in a particular branch or area of engineering.

Checklist: Why study engineering in the United Kingdom?

- You can study at institutions with an international reputation for technological research.
- A UK engineering qualification is recognised worldwide and should enable you to work virtually anywhere in the world.
- UK universities have a tradition of welcoming international students and you will be made to feel at home.
- Your technical knowledge will be augmented by skills that will be important to your career, such as communication and team-working.
- The opportunity to improve your fluency in English will improve your job prospects.

1 What do I need to think about?

There are various reasons to study engineering, and you should first be clear about your own reasons. Questions you may want to ask yourself include:

- Do you have a particular career in mind? Do you need to do a particular qualification as preparation for a specific profession or do you want to make yourself generally more employable?
- Do you want to specialise in a specific area of engineering? Does this discipline interface with any other disciplines, e.g. computer science (in software engineering)?

2 What can I study?

Qualification	Features
GNVQ and Scottish National Qualifications; BTEC/Edexcel First Diploma	Usually one year, full time. Can lead to A-level study or to a National Diploma course.
Vocational A-levels and Scottish Highers; SQA Higher National Certificate	One or two years full time. Foundation qualification for engineering technicians. Can be used for entry to undergraduate study.
BTEC/Edexcel/SQA Higher National Diploma (HND)	Usually two years full time. The HND is a respected qualification in its own right and can lead to qualification as an Incorporated Engineer (IEng). With good marks you also have the option of transferring into the second or third year of a degree course.
Foundation degrees	Two years full time. Foundation degrees are one level below honours degrees. Graduates can progress straight into employment or into the final year of a degree course. For more information go to www.foundationdegree.org.uk
Degree courses – BEng (Hons) (Bachelor of Engineering) or MEng (Master of Engineering)	<p>The MEng is an integrated Master's degree that is now offered alongside or in place of the BEng (Hons) at a number of institutions. It is growing in popularity. The MEng is a higher award than the BEng (Hons) and usually takes one year longer to complete. A BEng (Hons) usually takes between three and four years full time; a MEng takes between four and five years full time. BEng (Hons) students with high marks in their second year are usually offered the opportunity to transfer to the MEng.</p> <p>A professionally accredited MEng fulfils the educational requirements for the Chartered Engineer (CEng) qualification. A professionally accredited BEng (Hons) degree, plus an appropriate Master's degree or appropriate further learning to Master's level, will also meet the requirements.</p> <p>Several universities offer a foundation year before starting your degree – these are suitable for students whose entrance qualifications are not of the required standard.</p> <p>A professionally accredited Bachelor's degree fulfils the educational requirement for Incorporated Engineer (IEng) registration. Such degrees, which the Engineering Council (UK) sees as a growing field, usually last three years full time.</p>
Postgraduate qualifications, e.g. Postgraduate Diploma (PgD), Master of Science (MSc), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), New Route PhD	See <i>Choosing your postgraduate programme</i> in this series.



Checklist: Choosing the right course for you

- There are so many courses on offer that it is vital that you do careful research in advance to ensure you find the right one for you. Start your search on www.educationuk.org or www.prospects.ac.uk or www.postgrad.hobsons.com but always obtain prospectuses from all the institutions you are considering. Look at the institutions' websites and talk to the staff if possible.
- Universities and higher education colleges offer a wide variety of courses and it is difficult to compare institutions. There are many sources to consult about the quality of teaching and research. Look at the independent reviews conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency www.qaa.ac.uk/students and the information available on the new Teaching Quality Information site www.tqi.ac.uk. There are no official performance tables for universities, but some newspapers such as *The Times* and *The Guardian* publish unofficial league tables. The tables vary enormously depending on the factors assessed and the weightings used. Read the tables critically and do not base your final decision on the ratings alone.
- Bear in mind other factors, such as cost, location and size of the institution, international mix of students on the programmes, provision of supervision for dissertations and available facilities.

3 What are the entrance requirements for my course?

You should check with the institutions you are interested in for the exact nature of the qualifications or experience which they require. The UK National Academic Recognition Centre (UK NARIC) www.naric.org.uk is the official source of information on the comparability of international qualifications with those in the UK. UK NARIC supports universities and colleges but the final decision on the recognition of international qualifications is always made by the individual institution.

If you do not have the standard entry qualifications, some universities offer a foundation year providing remedial or conversion tuition before you start your BEng/MEng.

In general, for entry to postgraduate programmes all institutions will expect you to hold a university degree or the equivalent qualification from your home country. For further information see *Choosing your postgraduate programme* in this series.

4 How can I register as a professional?

The Engineering Council (UK) – EC^{UK} – has 36 member Institutions representing the various specialist areas of engineering. These Institutions are licensed by the EC^{UK} to be able to assess candidates for inclusion on its Register of professional Engineers and Technicians. The full list of Institutions is on <http://www.engc.org.uk/Institutions/Institutions.aspx>

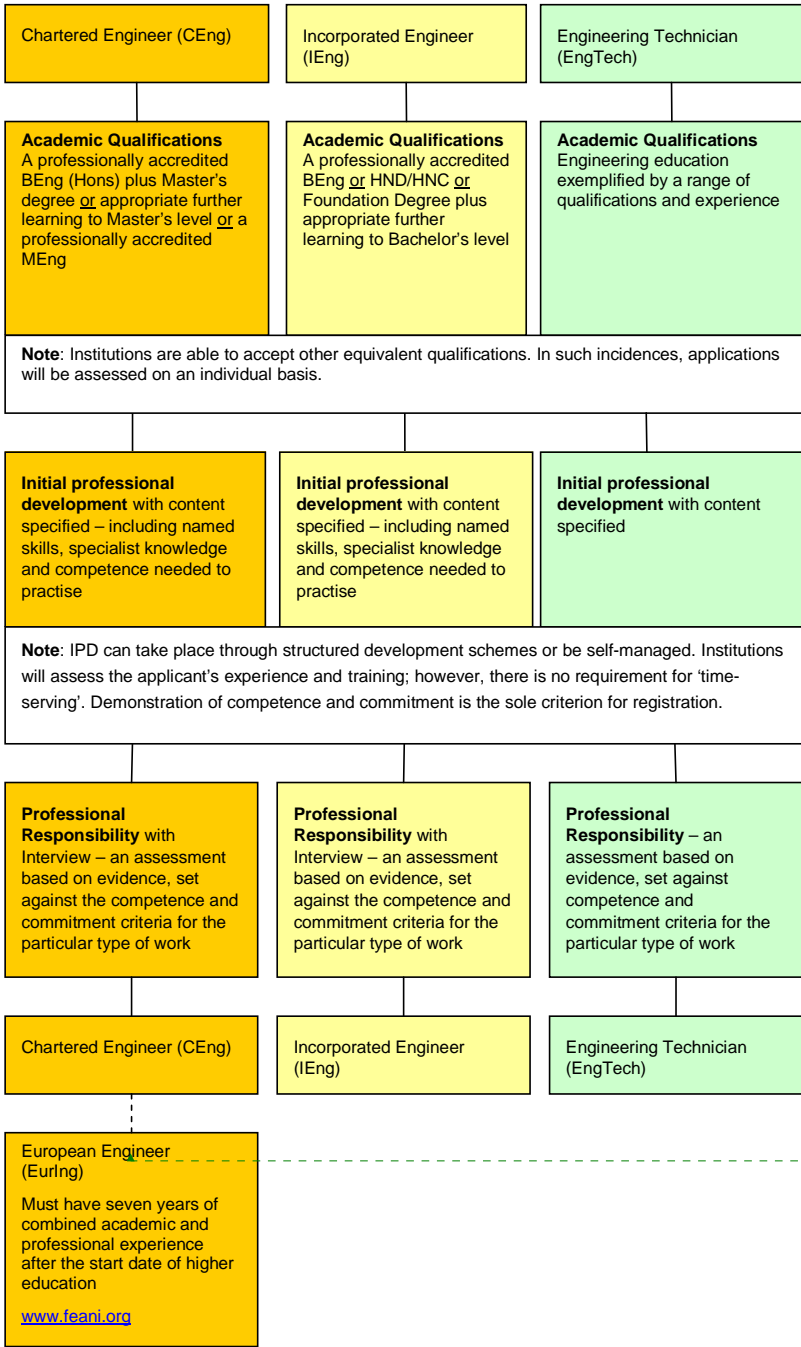
To become professionally registered as either a Chartered Engineer (CEng), Incorporated Engineer (IEng) or Engineering Technician (EngTech) you will need to join one of these member engineering Institutions. Normally you are able to apply for both Institution membership and EC^{UK} registration at the same time. Your chosen institution will assess your academic qualifications and your professional development/training.

More information about registration can be found at <http://www.engc.org.uk/UKSPEC/default.aspx>

See the table below for an outline of the routes to professional qualification.



Registration with the Engineering Council (UK)



Note: For all three registers, elements of academic formation and professional development may be undertaken at the same time.

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UK qualifications are internationally recognised and there are formal agreements that aim to ensure qualified engineers can work in many parts of the world. Further information on all international agreements can be found at <http://www.engc.org.uk/International/Default.aspx>

5 Next steps

Checklist: Your next steps

- If you know the branch of engineering in which you wish to specialise (e.g. electronic, mechanical, production), start your search on www.educationuk.org. For degree courses, check whether the course is on the EC^{UK}'s list of accredited degree courses – go to <http://www.engc.org.uk/Registration/ACAD/default.aspx>
- Always obtain the course prospectus or study the online version. Find out whether you have the required entry qualifications, including the relevant English language level. For an undergraduate course this may be an IELTS score of 5.5 to 6.5, while for a postgraduate course an IELTS score of 6.0 to 7.0 may be required. Ask your local British Council office where and when you can take the test.
- Make sure that the course you choose will be accepted in your own country by the relevant professional bodies and the government, if the job you want to do demands this.
- Apply for undergraduate degree courses, foundation degrees (England only) and Higher National Diploma through UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) at www.ucas.com. For other courses, apply to the institutions direct.

6 What else do I need to know?

You should bear in mind immigration requirements when considering whether to study in the UK. Requirements vary according to your nationality or citizenship and the length of time you want to study. You will not be allowed to extend your permission to stay in the UK for more than two years on courses that are below degree level and are of less than one year's duration. The UKCOSA website will give you further information on this topic – www.ukcosa.org.uk/pages/guidenote.htm

Note in particular that you will not be given permission to enter the UK as a student if the school, college or university that you want to study at does not appear on the UK Department for Education and Skills Register of Education and Training Providers. You can check the register by clicking on 'Browse the Register' at www.dfes.gov.uk/providersregister/



7 Where can I find out more information?

British Council

Website www.educationuk.org
www.educationuk.org/scotland

For further information, you can find details of your nearest office at www.britishcouncil.org/home-contact-worldwide.htm which includes links to all our country web pages and a worldwide address book giving contact details for all offices.

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)

Rosehill
New Barn Lane
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL52 3LZ
Telephone +44 (0) 870 1122 211
Fax +44 (0) 124 2544 961
Email enquiries@ucas.ac.uk
Website www.ucas.com

Engineering Council (UK)

10 Maltravers Street
London WC2R 3ER
Telephone +44 (0) 20 7240 7891
Fax +44 (0) 20 7379 5586
Email staff@engc.org.uk
Website www.engc.org.uk

Royal Academy of Engineering

29 Great Peter Street
London SW1P 3LW
Telephone +44 (0) 20 7227 0500
Fax +44 (0) 20 7233 0054
Website www.raeng.org.uk

FEANI (European Federation of National Engineering Associations)

Avenue Roger Vandendriessche 18
B-1150 Brussels
Belgium
Telephone +32 2 639 03 90
Fax +32 2 639 03 99
Website www.feani.org

UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (UK NARIC)

Oriel House, Oriel Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 1XP
Telephone +44 (0) 870 990 4088
Fax +44 (0) 1242 258 611
Email info@naric.org.uk
Website www.naric.org

Other useful resources

Complete Guide to Engineering Courses (Trotman, 2005, ISBN 085 6609 560) – information on more than 3,000 undergraduate courses and on the various branches of engineering.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the information given here is correct and up to date, the British Council accepts no legal liability for its accuracy, currency or completeness.

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Engineering

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