

Professional development

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Professional development Introduction Professional engineering is not just like any other job, it is both a mindset and a way of life. Engineers are known to apply their experience and judgement in solving problems when the limits of mathematics or scientific knowledge are evident. Their intent is to constantly eliminate or limit risk. The most successful creations of engineers recognize human fallibility, and complexity is their constant companion (Malpas 2000). This paper hence seeks to discuss the distinctions a professional engineer from any other sort of 'engineer' in the UK and the far the distinctions depend on being a professional-grade member of an engineering institution, or being entered onto the Engineering Council's register. The paper will also describe the advantages and disadvantages of adopting a licensing system for professional engineers similar to that for medical practitioners and teachers in the UK, and as applies to engineers in other countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia and some European states. Finally, the paper will explain the role of the codes and rules of conduct of engineering institutions in the UK and their effectiveness in ensuring professional standards of work. Distinctions of a professional engineer in the UK Professional engineers are distinct from any other sort of engineers in the UK. Engineering in the UK is a well respected profession internationally. In order to be recognized as a professional engineer or an engineering technician in the UK, an independent assessment of engineering competence is carried out on all levels of the engineering profession and is compared to the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC), which offers the means of achieving a successful assessment. Even for professionals whose status is secure, the process of registration provides a way of demonstrating recognition by their peers and support to others.

Accreditation determines whether one becomes a professional-grade member of an engineering institution, or being entered onto the Engineering Council's register. Without meeting the minimum requirements as stipulated in the Engineering Council, one may not be able to obtain the engineering practice license and/ or status (Engineering Council 2010, 2011). The Engineering Council Standard illustrates the value of becoming registered Engineering Technician (EngTech), Chartered Engineer (CEng), or Incorporated Engineer (IEng). It details the specifications that must be met for registration, and provides examples of how to do the same. This standard enables employers and individuals to determine whether they or their staff can meet the specified requirements, and discusses the necessary steps of achieving national registration. There are a lot of responsibilities carried out by registrants, including the need to observe their professional code of conduct stipulated by the council. This makes engineering profession in the UK distinct from any other sort of engineering profession. Advantages and disadvantages of adopting a licensing system for professional engineers

Licensing system is advantageous to professional engineers in the UK. This is obtained through registration and accreditation by the Engineering Council. Registration is open to all engineers who work within professional codes of conduct, maintain their competence, and participate within the profession actively. Licensing system has, to the UK society and economy, many advantages. First, the system sets apart professional engineers from those technicians and engineers not registered. It ascertains their proven understanding, knowledge and competence. Most specifically, licensing system demonstrates a commitment to the standards of the profession and develops as well as enhances competence. This also gives an edge to those

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professionals applying for available engineering positions. Licensing system provides a link to technicians and engineers with the professional institution which offers opportunities for professional development and guidance. Licensing system also keeps engineers and technicians abreast of any job opportunity and reminds both employers and them of their professional standing and societal obligations. In additions, employers of licensed engineers obtain assurance that their employees have been assessed for competence, established commitment to professional development and verified credentials. Licensing system also enables the professionals to gain recognition from their peers as those meeting the UK and international standards for knowledge and experience. This also means that such engineers are governed by a professional code of conduct, and gets assistance and reminders in determining their obligations under this code. Licensed engineers also stand a high chance of getting contracts in the UK and internationally. On the other hand, we cannot ascertain that there are significant disadvantages of the licensing system for engineers in the UK or even internationally. A part from maybe the cost and bureaucratic procedures involved, such as verifications and attainment of the specified requirements, licensing still remains advantageous and beneficial to both individual engineers and the economy of the UK (Malpas 2000). Role of the codes and rules of conduct of engineering institutions in the UK and their effectiveness in ensuring professional standards of work The Code of Professional Conduct of licensed professional engineering places personal obligations to members and ensures the members acts in public interest and with integrity. The codes of conduct are worded to encourage the professional members to act in compliance with the Statement of Ethical

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Principles published by the Royal Academy of Engineering and the Engineering Council. According to the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence 2011, the code of conduct is effective in ensuring professional standards of work because it obliges members to perform the following: Act in harmony with the principles of sustainability, and avoid preventable adverse impact on the society and environment. Maintain their competence, disclose relevant limitations of competence, and undertake only professional tasks for which they are competent. Observe the owed appropriate duties of confidentiality to appropriate parties. Reject bribery and any other form of corrupt and ensure others do likewise Act with due care, skill and diligence regarding the professional standards. Prevent stoppable danger to society and health. Accept proper responsibility for work carried out under their watch and supervision. Treat all persons with respect and fairly. Encourage others to advance their competence and learning. Assess relevant liability, and hold professional indemnity insurance if appropriate. Notify the Institution upon becoming bankrupt, or if convicted of a criminal offence, or disqualified as a Company Director. Notify the Institution of any significant violation of the Institution's Code of Conduct by another member. Avoid where possible perceived or real conflict of interest, and advise parties when such conflicts occur Manage and assess relevant risks and communicate appropriately. (The UK Standard For Professional Engineering Competence 2011) Bibliography Engineering Council 2010, 2011. Recognizing professional excellence. London: High Holborn. Malpas Robert. 2000. The Universe of Engineering: A UK Perspective. London: The Royal Academy of Engineering The UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence 2011