

Jan 08

Graduate Working Group

Copy to: Head of Product Development ECITB

### **BRIDGING THE BENG TO MENG GAP – INTERIM REPORT**

This report is produced to inform the Graduate Development Working Group (GDWG) of research undertaken so far to bridge the industry BEng to MEng gap, make recommendations for further action and to enable the GDWG to provide direction for the ECITB Consultant to conduct further research or development activities.

#### **Assumptions**

- Industry prefers Work-based Learning or if academic course Distance Learning
- Focus on IMechE, IET, IChemE, ICE and IStructE as main PEIs.
  - Schemes to meet needs of other PEIs may be addressed at a later date
- MSc programmes are too costly in both time and cost of programme
  - For company and individual
- All Graduates have accredited BEng.

#### **Research into Issues/Requirements**

Research is based on Graduate Survey conducted by Off-site RAM Nov 07 and telephone interviews conducted by ECITB.

- Issues
  - Insufficient guidance on meeting FL requirements of PEIs
  - Funding
  - Standardising of Institutional requirements
  - Lack of cohesive effort effecting Graduate market
  - ECuk exams too difficult, not supported
  - Difficulty stopping CEng moving into management roles
- Requirements
  - Work-based learning solution
  - Distance Learning programmes (Does not suit all companies)

- On-line learning
- Access to Masters modules
- ECITB providing clear Non-Technical programmes (companies who have existing schemes that meet technical deepening requirement)
  - SMTD
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Project Management
  - Management Training
  - Business Skills
- ECITB provision of accredited FL programme
- ECITB to promote careers in engineering

## Options

### Engineering Council UK Examinations

- See [Annex A](#) for detail
- Disadvantages
  - Not supported
  - Not enough units for all PEIs
- Advantages
  - Inexpensive
    - Registration and exam fees
  - Work-based
  - Not timebound
- Work to be done
  - Establish which modules are relevant to ECI PEIs
    - Gap analysis to establish 'missing' modules
  - City and Guilds develop 'missing' exam papers
  - HEI develop support programme for relevant modules
    - Open University Open Learn site

### Gateways Project (MSc in Prof Eng)

- WBL MSc programme
- Based on Kingston University (KU) [Learning Contract](#)
- [Professional Development Audit](#) establishes 'basket of learning'.

- Disadvantages
  - Still under development
  - Not yet recognised by all PEIs
  - Costs not yet clear
- Advantages
  - Supported WBL
  - Based on company specific activities
  - Tailored to individual
  - Engages PEI early
  - KU working with ICE in funded project to produce new material
  - KU and ECuk very keen to work with ECI
- Work to be done
  - Consult with IChemE and IStructE to establish requirements
  - Research existing Taught modules for import.
  - Work with Kingston University and PEIs to develop ECI MSc in Prof Eng.

#### Open University BEng to MEng

- Integrated MEng ([Annex B](#))
  - Must be completed within 4 years of BEng award
    - PGDip in Engineering awarded if longer than 4 years
  - Programme not yet accredited by PEIs
    - Expected in the spring
- Disadvantages
  - Will not meet the requirements of all PEIs
  - OU 'reputation' may discourage recruits and companies
- Advantages
  - Cost of programme (around £5k)
  - Opportunity to develop ECI specific programme
    - Joint marketing with OU.
    - Extra modules will cost Industry
  - Available now at no cost for applicable engineers.

#### Actions

- Establish Graduate marketing plan with Operations Director



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- Engage with PEIs to accredit ECITB TS&MP programmes for Non-Technical Broadening element of FL.

Notes: *to be completed after Graduate Working Group 29 Jan 08*

Actions to take development programme further:

Engage with OU to adopt current BEng to MEng model and role out to industry

Establish ECITB funding support for OU model

Define a Graduate Development Project: eg; collaborate with Kingston University/ECuk and PEIs to develop ECI MSC in Prof Eng