# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PURPOSE ........................................................................................................................................ 3
2. RESPONSIBILITY ............................................................................................................................... 4
3. AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTATION ............................................................................................ 4
4. SELF-STUDY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS OF PROGRAMME ............................................. 4
   4.1 Initial information to be submitted ........................................................................................................ 5
5. VISIT DOCUMENTATION .................................................................................................................. 5
   5.1 General ............................................................................................................................................. 5
   5.2 Submission by the Dean ......................................................................................................................... 5
6. VISIT DOCUMENTATION: SELF-STUDY SUBMISSION FOR EACH PROGRAMME ..................... 6
   6.1 Programme identification and responsibility ......................................................................................... 7
   6.2 Follow-up on previous visit ................................................................................................................... 8
   6.3 Programme and course information ...................................................................................................... 8
   6.4 Assessment of outcomes and assessment system .................................................................................. 10
   6.5 Teaching and learning and assessment process .................................................................................... 11
   6.6 Sustainability factors for the programme ............................................................................................. 12
7. REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR VISIT .................................................................................. 13
REVISION HISTORY................................................................................................................................. 15

## LIST OF TABLES
Table 1: Self-study documentation requirements ...................................................................................... 7

## LIST OF FIGURES
Figure 1: Documents defining the ECSA Requirements for Accreditation Visits ....................................... 3
BACKGROUND: ECSA ACCREDITATION SYSTEM DOCUMENTS

The documents that define the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA) system for accreditation of programmes meeting educational requirements for professional categories are shown in Figure 1 which also locates the current document.

Figure 1: Documents defining the ECSA Requirements for Accreditation Visits

1. PURPOSE

This document specifies the documentation regarding the responsibilities, timing, format and required content of a self-study programme that must be submitted by the provider prior to an accreditation visit. These requirements apply to programmes contemplated in the accreditation criteria defined in document E-03-P.

The notation for various persons and bodies defined in section 3 of document E-11-P is used in this document.
2. RESPONSIBILITY

In arranging an accreditation visit, the ECSA deals with a single point of contact in the provider, the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering or an officer with full delegation of authority by the Dean. The Dean is, therefore, responsible for ensuring that the necessary documentation is submitted to the ECSA prior to the visit. The Dean is required to identify the person(s) responsible for preparing the documentation regarding the individual self-study programme and coordinating the detailed arrangements for each programme. The ECSA’s single point of contact is the Education Manager. Closer to the visit, other points of contact are as defined in document E-11-P.

3. AVAILABILITY OF DOCUMENTATION

Documentation must reach the ECSA office not later than six weeks before the visit. The ECSA reserves the right to cancel an accreditation visit if the documentation is not received in time.

Attention is drawn to the requirement stated in section 7 below that documentation must be readily available during the visit. Failure to produce on-site documentation or undue delay may jeopardise a favourable team recommendation.

The Head of the Department is expected to ensure that academic staff have access to the documentation since the team may raise matters regarding the documentation during interviews.

4. SELF-STUDY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS OF PROGRAMME

The following required documentation of a self-study programme provides the accreditation team with the information needed in the order that the evaluation is made. The documentation consists of four parts:

1. Initial information provided by the Dean at the start of planning the visit, as specified in section 4.1 of this document
2. Submission by the Dean, as specified in section 5 of this document
3. Self-contained self-study submission for each programme to be evaluated, as specified in section 6 of this document
4. Information must be available during the visit, as specified in section 7 of this document
A bound copy of the self-study with its Appendix 1 bound separately must be submitted for each programme. An equal number of bound copies of the Dean's submission (Item 2 above) is required. An electronic submission of the documents identified in items 2 and 3 above is also required. This may be on a memory stick or uploaded to an ECSA server by arrangement. Five memory sticks are required per programme.

Items 2 and 3 must be submitted to the ECSA at least six weeks prior to the visit. (The accreditation policy requires documentation as a prerequisite for a visit to take place and provides for cancellation of the visit should documentation not be submitted in time.)

4.1 Initial information to be submitted

When a visit is initiated, the Dean must submit the following information to the ECSA for team selection and for determining the teams required, particularly for closely related programmes:

- List of programmes that will be offered or are planned for the period of accreditation
- For each programme:
  - The department responsible for the programme;
  - The person responsible for the programme;
  - The curriculum showing the courses/modules, whether these are compulsory or elective, the credits allocated and the year/semester in which the programme is to be offered (The format for this information is defined in columns 1 and 2 of Table 1 in document E-13-P.)
  - Major curriculum changes in progress or planned;
  - Degree of commonality of assessment methodology with other programmes.

5. VISIT DOCUMENTATION

5.1 General

To restrict the physical volume of pre-visit documentation, double-sided printing must be used and a ring-binder that permits the volume(s) to be opened flat must be employed.

5.2 Submission by the Dean

Prior to each accreditation visit, the Dean of the faculty is requested to prepare and submit a
self-study statement to the ECSA that encompasses:

- strategic objectives of the provider and the faculty that is home to the engineering programmes together with an assessment of the extent to which the programmes are consistent with institutional objectives. These should be drawn from the faculty’s business plan or other approved university documentation. Credits must be calculated according to the procedure specified in document E-01-P;
- the faculty’s educational objectives and commitment to outcome-based programme objectives and student assessment;
- the provider and faculty policy and practice for quality assurance, continuous quality improvement of the programme and assessment of students;
- faculty finances, capital and operating costs both current and for the previous four years for staff, operational expenses, equipment, computing and networking, library, travel and research funding. Table 10 of document E-P-13 may be used. The process for obtaining and allocating funding must be described under the various headings;
- common facilities to support programmes;
- description of academic development programme(s) for students who do not meet normal entry requirements;
- selection and admission of students in relation to the institution’s equity and diversity plans;
- staff equity and diversity plans in relation to the institution’s plans and the level of achievement by department/school;
- perceived strengths and weaknesses of the faculty, departments and programmes; and any other matters considered relevant.

6. VISIT DOCUMENTATION: SELF-STUDY SUBMISSION FOR EACH PROGRAMME

Prior to each regular accreditation visit, the Head of Department is required to prepare and submit a self-study statement to the ECSA that encompasses the elements defined in sections 6.1 to 6.6 below.

These per-programme documentation requirements are written primarily for a Regular Visit, Interim Visit or Final Visit. In the case of an Interim Report, the accreditation committee must specify the scope of the required documentation. In the case of a submission for Provisional
Evaluation, the documentation must address all issues, detailing the entire curriculum and plans or commitments for stages not implemented. In the case of a submission for Initial Evaluation, Simplified Initial Evaluation or Desktop Evaluation, items identified in Table 1 must be addressed. In the case of Initial Evaluation, items identified in Table 1 must be addressed at the planning level at the very least.

Table 1: Self-study documentation requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evaluation</th>
<th>Self-Study: Sections of E-12-P to be completed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desktop</td>
<td>*</td>
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</table>

Key: *: Required, +: required for re-submission

Major items of documentation not listed in section 5.2 that are common to all programmes may be included in the Dean’s documentation and cross-referenced from the programme documents.

The Head of Department or Programme Coordinator designated by the Head of Department is responsible for the correctness and completeness of all documentation, both pre-visit and on-site, and this responsibility may not be delegated to other staff members.

Persons responsible for preparing the self-study and on-site documentation must ensure that the documentation presents the evidence that allows the team to evaluate the programme against the criteria in document E-03-P using the framework presented in document E-14-P.

The section headings in section 6 may be used as section headings in the self-study submission.

6.1 Programme identification and responsibility

- Name of provider
- Name of department
- Full name and abbreviation of the qualification as defined in the provider’s rules
- The person responsible for the programme
- Identify all pathways by which students may obtain the qualification, for example, study at different sites, modes of learning (contact/distance), access programmes,
articulation, and franchise and transfer arrangements (If necessary, describe the pathways to the degree by means of a diagram.)

- Under the following headings, summarise any major changes that have occurred since the last accreditation visit, giving dates of implementation and cohorts of affected students:
  - Educational objectives, curriculum structure and content;
  - Assessment of exit-level outcomes or graduate attributes;
  - Teaching, learning, assessment and quality assurance;
  - Staff, students and other resources.

- Describe plans for changes to the programme, outcomes, assessment and resources that will come into effect during the next accreditation cycle. For every change, identify the cohort of students that will graduate under each identified variant curriculum and the range of years over which graduates are expected.

### 6.2 Follow-up on previous visit

Depending on the decision of the previous visit, provide statements in regard to the following:

- In the case of an Interim Report, Interim Visit or Final Visit
  - A statement indicating how the deficiencies identified at the previous visit have been remedied;
  - A statement of major changes to the programme, which are unrelated to the additional deficiencies that must be remedied
- If concerns were expressed in the decision letter of the previous visit, the provider's response to these concerns must be detailed.

### 6.3 Programme and course information

This includes the following:

- A statement of the educational objectives (purpose) of the programme and the exit-level outcomes or graduate attributes of the programme (For stating the objectives and outcomes or graduate attributes for its students and constituency, the provider's format should be used.)
• A description of the structure of the programme in terms of the courses/modules, including whether these are compulsory or elective, the credits allocated and the allocation to semesters or year of study. (Table 1 of document E-13-P must be used. Table 1 also provides for the contact and other activities associated with each course, that is, lectures, tutorials, laboratory assignments and other activities.)
• Analysis of the programme content by knowledge area in the format defined in Table 1 of document E-13-P and supported by Table 1A
• Identification and description of the design of the core of the programme comprising mathematics, basic sciences and fundamental engineering sciences (This must be more than a mere list of courses. Rather, the logic underlying the construction of the core and the arguments for its coherence must be presented.)
• Identification of the specialist study components of the programme (The objectives and logic underlying the specialist components must be presented.)
• The progression rules governing the requirements for constructing curricula and the award of the qualification, including explicitly stated articulation options into, out of and beyond the programme
• A summary of the criteria for awarding credit, allowing re-assessment, allowing repeat courses, progression of students from one year to the next, graduation and exclusion from the programme (Details of the assessment system must be summarised in Table 2.)
• As Appendix 1 to the programme submission, provide a specification for each course/module of the curriculum, including service courses, as a separate bound volume consisting of at least
  o course outcomes;
  o exit-level outcomes or graduate attributes where applicable;
  o means by which the students are assessed against the outcomes;
  o detailed content; and
  o a list of prescribed books and other supporting material.

This information should preferably be in the form presented to each student.

A Table of Contents referring to the individual course documents and bound in the sequence used when entering courses in Table 1 must be included. Columns 1 and 2 of Table 1 may form the
6.4 Assessment of outcomes and assessment system

In this section, the academic entity responsible for the programme is required to provide evidence that the evaluation team can use to answer questions 2.1 and 2.2: Does the assessment within the programme

- ensure that all graduates satisfy each exit-level outcome or graduate attribute defined in the relevant standard?
- use a documented set of assessment criteria and processes that together demonstrate that the outcomes or attributes are satisfied at the level indicated by the range statement?

In order to provide evidence, the following must be fulfilled:

- Each outcome or attribute specified in the relevant standard must be explicitly addressed in terms of the means of assessment, the criteria for satisfaction of each outcome or attribute and the required level at exit level. Evidence must be presented using Table 3 of document E-13-P, indicating under each outcome or attribute
  - the course(s) or module(s) in which assessment of the outcome or attribute takes place at exit level;
  - the assessment criteria and the method of assessment;
  - the level of performance required of the student; and
  - the consequences for the student of not satisfying the outcome or attribute.
- A description of the internal policies and procedures to validate the assessment of exit-level outcomes or graduate attributes through internal processes and external moderation must be presented.
- A concise analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the system of assessing exit-level outcomes or graduate attributes must be documented.

Note that assessment material for each course as specified in this section must be available on site.
6.5 Teaching and learning and assessment process

Provide evidence of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process within the programme, addressing at least the following aspects:

- Taking the student entry level into account, how does the programme develop
  - fundamental and core disciplinary knowledge;
  - specialist knowledge; and
  - the student towards satisfying the exit-level outcomes or graduate attributes.

The format specified in Table 4 of document E-13-P is recommended together with a suitable commentary.

- What is the teaching and learning methodology, how is it geared towards the student entry routes and level(s) and which learning opportunities does it provide?

- Which are the provided academic development programmes? Present a description of each. (If the academic development of students in the programme is covered fully in the Dean’s submission, simply cross reference it here and highlight any programme-specific conditions).

- How does the programme develop independent learning?

- How is the programme coordinated?

- What is the role of formative assessment in the programme? How does the assessment process provide timely feedback to students?

- How and at which stages is the progress of students monitored?

- What are the details of the method of moderation of assessment according to university practice? Include the role of moderators, second examiners and external examiners.

- Who are the external examiners, second examiners, moderators, etc. and what are their affiliations and qualifications? Which duties are assigned to each? Provide a list. Table 5 provides a format for this information.

- What are the processes used by the department/school for assessing and continuously improving the quality of the teaching, learning and assessment of the programme? Provide specimen paper trails for quality assurance and the improvement aspects of the programme.

- What are the internal academic and administrative checks and balances in the assessment and promotion system? Provide a brief description.
• What are the academic and administrative procedures for programme review and development, including service courses? Provide a brief description.

• What is the throughput of the programme and how does it vary by gender and race? What measures are taken to monitor and improve/maintain throughput? Data must be presented as a cohort analysis according to Table 6 of document E-13-P.

• What are the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching, learning and assessment process and the quality assurance and improvement process? Provide a concise analysis.

6.6 Sustainability factors for the programme

• Students
  o What are the entry routes to the programme (including academic development programmes) and what are the entry requirements for each route? Any admission rating formulas must be explained. What is the distribution of students entering by the various routes? What is the distribution of students by admission rating for recent school-leavers? Use Table 7 in document E-13-P.
  o Describe the capacity of the school/department to conduct the programme for the enrolled number of students as reflected in Table 6, taking into account other commitments that the unit may have.

• Staff
  o Provide a list of the staff who are teaching in the programme with their academic and professional qualifications and experience, specialities and publication numbers. Staff who are giving support courses to the degree programme should also be listed. Table 8 in document E-13-P shows the preferred format. The registration status with the ECSA and/or other bodies of each member of the engineering staff must be shown (See section 7.7: CVs of the academic staff must be available on site).
  o Provide key staff indicators as defined in Table 9 of document E-13-P.
  o Provide a description of strategies for staff recruitment, development and retention.
  o Describe the research profile of the staff and opportunities for the research development of staff.
  o List the support staff, showing their overall responsibilities and contributions to the
programme.

- **Resources**
  - List the budget allocations to the programme’s host department over a five-year period under the headings equipment, computing, operational, library books and journals. Headings may vary depending on provider budget categories. Use Table 10 of document.
  - List the laboratories that support the programme with a short description of the facilities and function of each and the support provided for the programme.
  - List the available computing and networking facilities to (a) students in the programme; and (b) staff of the department, indicating the capacity and the time of availability for students in the programme.

- **Impact of the programme**
  - Describe measures to assess the impact of the programme and how the results are used to improve the programme.

7. **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION FOR VISIT**

Materials relating to service courses must be available in every Team Conference Room during accreditation visits, with student scripts selected from the programme concerned. Items 1 to 4 in the list below should be presented in a file for each course. Alternatively, material may be presented in a properly indexed file system on a server that is accessible to the team. The following must be available:

1. assessment materials for each course, including test papers, assignments and project statements, examination question papers with specimen solutions (memoranda) for the last three years (Materials for all courses taught by service departments must be available at a central venue);
2. marked examination, project and assignment scripts of all courses/modules for the most recent year (The number of scripts to be presented is the smaller of the number in the class or the number 15);
3. a selection of the best, the average and just passed/failed students’ scripts in each course;
4. examples of final-year design and/or laboratory/investigational projects for the most recent year that are representative of the range of sub-disciplines in the programme of good, average and just passed/failed students (The number of reports to be presented...
is the smaller of the number in the class or the number 15); 

5. course material supplied to current students or expected to be obtained by students: tutorial sheets, instruction sheets for laboratory experiments, prescribed texts, notes, etc.;

6. information on the times that students may access the laboratory, computing facilities and other resources;

7. access to individual student academic records on request;

8. CVs of the department’s academic staff (These may be full CVs or two-page summaries. CVs of service course staff are not required; their details are summarised in Table 8);

9. documentation on the internal quality assurance process, including sample paper trails for selected courses and all exit-level outcomes; and

10. documentation on the moderation process (internal and external), including the moderators’ high-level reports for the most recent examinations.
# REVISION HISTORY

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<td>26 Aug 2006</td>
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<td>30 Nov 2006</td>
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<td>19 January 2007</td>
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<tr>
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<td>23 Apr 2014</td>
<td>Changes as indicated in marginal notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. 2: Draft B</td>
<td>3 June 2012</td>
<td>Changes resulting from consultations with Deans, ESGB, EPAC incorporated</td>
<td>EPAC recommendation for approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. 2</td>
<td>31 July 2014</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. 3 :Draft A</td>
<td>13 Feb 2018</td>
<td>Errors corrected, adding graduate attributes</td>
<td>Working group</td>
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<td>22 May 2018</td>
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The List for:

Self-Study Documentation Requirements for Accreditation Visits

Revision 3 dated 22 May 2018 and consisting of 15 pages has been reviewed for adequacy by the Business Unit Manager and is approved by the Executive: Policy Development and Standards Generation (PDSG).

Business Unit Manager

Executive: PDSG

This definitive version of this policy is available on our website.