



Prof. John Chudley - Valuing all routes to entering the engineering profession and the role of professional registration

Report written by Kamran Pedram, University of Greenwich

Professor Chudley discussed the need to change the engineering registration and competence framework to prioritise experiential learning, technical competence, and commitment to the profession. Reforms proposed included more flexible pathways, parallel technician engineer pathways, and a rebalancing of competence and commitment. The challenges faced by the engineering profession in the UK, including the reduction in the number of engineers on the register, lack of diversity, and the need for more inclusive routes to professional development, were also discussed. The importance of maintaining a registry of professionally registered engineers was emphasised, while concerns about the lack of a licence to practice engineering were raised. He emphasises the importance of professional registration and the value of individual routes to assessment and highlights the need to value all routes and use the register for the benefit of the public good. He argues that the traditional model of progressing through the engineering register is not fit for purpose and needs to be revised to better meet the needs of professionals.

Prof. Chudley reflects on his path into engineering from apprenticeship to engineering director, highlighting the value of hands-on learning and industry support, hence the importance of considering alternative routes and encouraging the audience to think creatively about making engineering more accessible and exciting for young people. He advocates for apprenticeships as a viable alternative to academic routes, emphasising the importance of industry recognition and support to attract more young people to the engineering profession. In addition, Prof. Chudley highlights the need for the engineering profession to improve diversity and inclusion, particularly for women, and suggests the register should be revised to better reflect the sector. He also expresses concern about the decline in the number of Chartered Engineer (CEng) titles and the lack of awareness about other registering levels, leading to a lack of diversity in the profession. He advocates for "professional apprenticeships" over "degree apprenticeships" to better reflect the focus on occupational competence and discussed that the Engineers in the UK and US can transfer credentials through mutual recognition agreements.

