

Research, Innovation & Knowledge Transfer Committee

Terms of Reference

1 Background

This paper outlines proposed Terms of Reference for the Research, Innovation and Knowledge Transfer Committee. As proposals, they are for discussion by the Committee with a view to amendment and/or adoption.

2 Purpose

The Research, Innovation & Knowledge Transfer Committee oversees the activities of the Engineering Professors' Council relating to the practice, management and funding of engineering research and innovation (whether publicly funded or privately) and the wider dissemination of the understanding of engineering through knowledge exchange and transfer activities.

The Committee provides strategic insight and advice to the EPC Executive, advocates for the interests of UK engineering higher education with key stakeholders and promotes effective collaboration with other organisations working in this field.

Aims

The Committee aims to:

- Provide the EPC Executive with timely, evidence-informed insight into emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in engineering higher education (particular as it pertains to the UK).
- Nurture and curate a growing bank of resources, exemplars, and activities that support excellence in research, innovation and knowledge transfer activities among EPC members
- Take the lead on behalf of the EPC on activities relating to establishing closer ties between academia and industry and collaborations between them.
- Provide leadership for a strong and connected network of members, partners, and affiliates engaged in research, innovation and knowledge transfer.
- Offer expert commentary and advice to support the EPC Executive in positively influencing relevant policy and public discourse.
- Undertake horizon scanning within the Committee's remit to collect and analyse intelligence that:
 - supports and develops EPC members;

- promotes the cause of engineering in higher education among professional bodies, the media, policymakers, Government, and funding bodies; and
 - informs and influences policy to improve the development and delivery of engineering higher education programmes.
- Identify and prioritise research needs aligned with the above aims, and consider appropriate routes for initiating or supporting such research.
- Support initiatives that promote innovation in the areas of higher education practice covered by the Committee.

3 Ways of Working

- The Committee meets three times per year on a termly basis, providing a regular and predictable rhythm for strategic oversight, horizon scanning, and policy-related sense-making.
- Meetings are normally held virtually.
- The Committee operates through a combination of full Committee meetings and smaller task groups. Full Committee meetings focus on strategic direction, prioritisation, and integration, while detailed work is undertaken by task groups subject to need.
- At the end of each Committee meeting, the Chair facilitates agreement of a small number of key messages and recommendations to be communicated to the EPC Board on the Committee's behalf.
- Records of meetings and summaries of activities are documented and made available via a dedicated webpage on the EPC website.
- The Committee agrees an annual schedule of business, including a draft dissemination programme, normally at the first meeting of the academic year following EPC Congress. This programme sets priorities for the year while retaining flexibility to respond to emerging issues in the higher education and policy landscape.
- The Committee may establish time-limited or standing task groups to progress specific work packages within its remit. Task groups meet more frequently than the full Committee, either virtually or in person, and typically operate for a defined period.
- Task group membership is drawn from Committee members and, where appropriate, co-opted contributors with relevant expertise. Task groups may be asked to produce briefings, analyses, consultation responses, or other outputs to support EPC activity.
- The Committee identifies members willing to participate in task groups that can respond rapidly to external policy developments, including consultations from policymakers. Subject

to the EPC Executive's discretion, policy-focused task groups may operate under the auspices of this Committee.

- The Committee provides regular updates to the EPC Executive on significant developments within its remit, alongside progress against the agreed programme of work. Formal updates are provided to the EPC Board through the established governance cycle, supplemented where necessary by interim briefings on time-sensitive matters.

4 Membership

- The Committee will have a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair will serve for a term of three years. For eighteen months prior to assuming the role of chair, they will serve as Vice Chair, and again for eighteen months after completing their term as Chair.
- The Chair will be selected by the Committee, usually from among the members of the Committee, at the meeting before they assume the role of Vice Chair (Chair-elect). At the time of their appointment as Vice Chair, the Chair must be a member of the Engineering Academics Network (usually by virtue of association with an EPC member institution).
- Chairs and Vice-Chairs will be subject to approval by the EPC Board. They may serve as Chair or Vice Chair until approval at the next regular Board meeting.
- Chairs and Vice-Chairs will be ex officio members of the EPC Board. They may not act in their own approval or removal.
- There is no formal limit on the size of the Committee or task groups. However, the Committee will aim always to have at least 8 members (excluding EPC staff) and no more than 12 unless needed to ensure diversity.
- The Committee and task groups will comprise EPC members and others who may be coopted, including from EPC Partner organisations or from outside academia.
- Formal membership of the Committee will be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair, subject to the approval of the existing committee members. Any member of the Engineering Academics Network is entitled to attend Committee meetings, unless the Chair specifically allocates an item of business as reserved for Committee members only.
- Membership of the Committee will initially be for a three-year term, but may be extended for additional terms subject to the approval of the Chair.
- If a Committee member misses two consecutive meetings without submitting their apologies or otherwise acts in a way that contravenes the wider purpose of the Committee and the EPC, then they may be removed by the Chair. The Chair may be removed on a similar basis by the EPC Board.