



EPC Bulletin | July 2020 | Twitter [@EngProfCouncil](#)

The EPC AGM may have been held online this year, but as always it aligns with the release of the **EPC's Annual Review**; a whistle stop tour of the many initiatives, campaigns, publications, events, and other activities led by the EPC over the past year.

Of course, from at least the middle of March there has been almost no aspect of our work that has not been transformed by the emergency measures relating to the outbreak. Within the EPC family, we realise our members have faced enormous challenges and the pandemic has caused our Board and Executive to continue to consider how we can best support our members in meeting these challenges.

We've seen record levels of engagement from you in response to our series of **live-stream webcasts**, reaching out to you with three live events as part of our **New Approaches** initiative throughout June and July.

As you know, we postponed our **Annual Congress** that was to be held in Sheffield Hallam in April to September and we can now announce that Congress will take place **online** in the form of a series of free-to-members **Congress events from 7th to 18th September**.

This sets the precedent for our annual **Recruitment and Admissions forum**, which we are pleased to announce will also be held online this year across four Wednesdays in November and December.

Finally, we have now resumed our programme of research; do get involved through our **Admissions Survey** and **Surveys for European engineering staff and students in the UK**.

EPC news

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020: and what a year it has been

This year brought us a new Prime Minister, a general election and three new(ish) Universities Ministers. The long-awaited Augar Review arrived and festered but may yet return. Meanwhile, the post-Brexit issues of visas and Erasmus+ joined the ongoing home debates around TEF and PQA. Then, of course, all this was overtaken by Covid-19 and its unprecedented impact on the world, the HE sector and engineering. See how the EPC has responded and led the debates through our events, campaigns and initiatives over the past 12 months in our [Annual Review](#) of 2020 in a new easy-read format.

EPC PRESIDENTS' PRIZE: awarded to Prof John Perkins CBE FREng

Every two years, the EPC honours an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to engineering education and academia and this year the President, Professor Colin Turner has announced that its biennial President's Prize has been awarded to Prof John Perkins CBE FREng for his outstanding contribution to engineering education.

In response, Professor Perkins' addressed members on 'Engineering skills for the future' in June. This is a subject on which he might reasonably be called the nation's leading expert: it was the focus of his influential 2013 report for the Government (when he was scientific adviser to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) and was revisited in a follow-up paper, published last year to which EPC contributed the higher education chapter.

WEBCAST SUCCESS: recordings now available

Following our webcast on 'Accreditation under Lockdown' in May, the EPC's extremely successful webcast series continued in June and July with a series of three live 'New Approaches webcasts', in association with the IET, drawing registrations from over 750 EPC members and guests.

- Professor John Perkins on 'Engineering skills for the future'
- A panel on using digital skills in new approaches
- A panel on whether the requirements of accreditation are a barrier to innovation

New Approaches to Engineering Higher Education is the name of the initiative we've been running jointly with the IET for a few years looking at innovative pedagogies in engineering HE and other novel ways of attracting a wider and more diverse body of students and ensuring that they are prepared for the engineering challenges of tomorrow.

All webcasts to date have been a huge success, attracting hundreds of you, our members. If you have missed any of our live-stream events, you can access the recordings on the [EPC website](#).

BREXIT IMPACT: Take part in EPC research exploring the experiences of engineering staff and students from the EU

The EPC continues to campaign to ensure the best possible prospects after Brexit for our members through our on-going partnership with CEE at UCL on a Royal Academy of Engineering-funded project looking at the experiences and expectations of European nationals currently studying and working in engineering HE in the United Kingdom and how the engineering education sector can support our members.

If you are a non-UK European citizen and an engineering academic working in a UK Higher Education Institution, **we want to hear from you**. Please visit the [EPC website](#) to take part in the survey. And if you can, support us by asking your non-UK European engineering students to take part in the [student survey](#) too.

ENGINEERING ACADEMICS' NETWORK

We'd like to remind you about our soft launch of the Engineering Academics Network – a new initiative for EPC members to connect as individuals. For the moment, the EAN will connect mostly through a new LinkedIn Group which can be found at bit.ly/LinkedInEAN and through a programme

of events. We brought forward these plans in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions on face-to-face networking and events.

In due course, the EAN will move to become the driving force behind the EPC's new online offering – a redesigned and fully dynamic website and membership database. Over the coming months, we will roll out the EAN and a range of activities on which many of the key elements on the EPC's strategic plan rely. The intention is to provide a more user-friendly and user-tailored online experience that makes it easier for our members to find content on the site, specifically content which is relevant to their individual needs and interests. This initiative represents the EPC's largest ever programme of investment – the reward after many years of careful management of our limited resources.

In the meantime, do join our [LinkedIn Engineering Academics Network](#) to discuss the disruptions facing engineering and the evolving solutions.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We'd like to congratulate Professor Mike Sutcliffe, Deputy Dean at TEDI-London, on his election to the position of EPC Deputy President and President-Elect. He will take over as President from next year's AGM. Mike replaces Prof Sarah Spurgeon (UCL) who after a year as Deputy President, following her own two-year term as President, now steps down. We are very grateful to her for her dedication and service to our community.

Also re-elected to the EPC Board were Dave Allan (NMiTE), Lisa Brodie (UWE) and Stefaan Simons (Brunel). Welcome back to all of them and to Andrew McLaren (Strathclyde), who has been co-opted as the EPC Board's Scotland representative.

In other AGM business, in recognition of the hardship many universities may face over the coming year, it was agreed to waive the statutory inflation-linked rise in EPC subscription fees, but instead freeze rates and introduce a new lower band for institutions with fewer than ten engineering academic staff.

Upcoming events

EPC ONLINE EVENT: Annual Congress 2020 - Industry & Academia: Supercharging the Crucible, 7th, 8th, 11th, 15th, 18th September 2020

Given the ongoing public health situation, the EPC has decided to transform our Annual Congress into a programme of online webcasts, events and activities spanning two weeks in September. While we're obviously disappointed not to be getting together in the traditional way and are grateful to Sheffield Hallam University (and particularly Prof Alan Smith) for their kindness in agreeing to host and help organise Congress, we're hugely excited about the new approach that offers a dazzling programme of events as well as networking opportunities, fun and a sense of occasion.

We sticking as closely as possible to the amazing line-up of discussions and speakers while adding an online spin to proceedings. To that end, we have split what would have been 3 days of activities into 5 online sessions on Sept 7th, 8th, 11th, 15th and 18th. The full proposed programme is available [here](#). (Please note: some speakers are yet to be confirmed in their new time slots.) Best of

all, the EPC is now offering Congress completely **free** to members (£50 to non-members). Please book your place [here](#).

EPC ONLINE EVENT: Recruitment and Admissions Forum 2020, 18th, 25th November and 2nd, 9th December 2020

In response to the ongoing interruption to physical events resulting from Covid-19, the Recruitment and Admissions Committee is pleased to announce that the **Annual EPC Recruitment and Admissions Forum** will be held remotely as series of online webinars. With sessions focusing on timely admissions and recruitment topics (see below) we hope this is more accessible than ever to our members with responsibilities or an interest in these areas.

- Qualifications and A level predictions
- Recovering the international student market
- Trends and disruptions in admissions
- Access and contextual offers

We hope to publish the full line-up on the [EPC website](#) shortly. In the meantime, why not read out latest data blog: '[How will the probable collapse in international student numbers as a result of coronavirus affect UK Engineering departments?](#)' which considers the current threat to the international engineering student market.

EPC 'NEW APPROACHES' WEBCAST SERIES: Date TBC

Best of both: Blended learning: In association with the IET, this webcast will look at the lessons over the past few months about what we should keep in terms of online teaching and how best to integrate that with face-to-face. Watch this space for further details.

EPC SECTORAL GROUP EVENTS: COMEH members meeting, 7th September 2020

An online meeting / event for COMEH members to discuss collaborative programmes of work. Please save the date. More information will be available on the [EPC website](#) in due course.

EPC SECTORAL GROUP EVENTS: AAU/Aerospace Sectoral Group Annual General Meeting and Annual Student Conference, 23rd October 2020,

Save the date. This will take place at UWE, more details to follow.

EPC SECTORAL GROUP EVENTS: ACED Annual Conference, 5th – 6th November 2020

Save the date. The Annual Conference will be held this year at the Chelmsford Campus of Anglia Ruskin University. Further details to follow.

EPC SECTORAL GROUP EVENTS: PHEE/PHOMME Conference 2021, 13th January 2021.

Save the date. This will take place at the Institute of Mechanical Engineers. More details to follow.

OTHER EVENTS: 1st International Conference on Science and Technology Education STE 2020, 15th to 16th October 2020

The 1st International Conference on Science and Technology Education STE 2020 will take place in Porto, Portugal. Please note the change of date.

The focus is on education in science and technology. The conference will provide an international forum for the sharing, dissemination and discussion of research, experience and perspectives

across a wide range of teaching and learning issues. Further information is available on the [conference website](#).

OTHER EVENTS: International Conference of Multiphysics, 10th – 11th December 2020, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

The Aerospace Sectoral Group will sponsor the Aerospace Session as in the past 14 years. For more information, please visit the [conference website](#).

OTHER EVENTS: EAEEIE 2020 Annual Conference, 10th to 13th February 2021

The 30th Annual Conference of the European Association for Education in Electrical and Information Engineering (EAEEIE) will be held in Prague, Czech Republic. Please note the change of date.

The Conference will bring together lecturers, researchers and professionals in the field of Electrical and Information Engineering (EIE) all over Europe and outside, with the aim to exchange ideas and information and contribute to the development of EIE education. Short abstracts for full paper presentation at the conference can be submitted [here](#).

In the news

UNIVERSITY BAILOUT

The UK government has published details of its restructuring regime for providers that run into trouble due to Covid-19, setting out a number of conditions for support if a provider were to need a bailout loan.

Gavin Williamson, Education Secretary, and Michelle Donelan, Universities Minister, have been discussing the value of UK degrees, and the Government's interpretation of "low-quality" courses will be included in its response to the post-18 education and funding review (aka the Augar Review). The possibility of differential fees (rejected by Augar) has been mooted again: the latest suggestion is that fees should be lowered for Engineering and other STEM courses, but this may just be political kite-flying. This, of course, would work counter to the research and science agenda when it comes to restarting the economy.

Meanwhile, Labour has launched 'a campaign for students', citing that no university should be allowed to go bust; cooperation among universities across the UK; and universities' civic role as key tests.

The Welsh Government has given HEFCW an extra £27m to use at their discretion to support teaching, research and students - with a suggestion of the potential for more to come.

ACCREDITATION UNDER LOCKDOWN: Engineering Council response to queries raised in the recent EPC webinar

The Engineering Council has received a number of queries from engineering academics with regards to the approaches they should take to delivery and assessment of degrees in light of the Covid-19 emergency. We have published [Covid19: Information for HE Providers](#) on our website. This emphasises that we are flexible with regards to delivery and assessment, so long as HEIs can continue to demonstrate to accrediting professional engineering institutions that graduating students will have achieved the required learning outcomes.

We have received a number of requests from academics to provide additional guidance focusing upon delivery and assessment. We have reached the conclusion, in discussion with professional engineering institutions at the Engineering Accreditation Board, that this would not be appropriate as it is a matter for individual university departments to decide upon the delivery and assessment methods that best suit their curriculum, students and circumstances.

The Engineering Council and professional engineering institutions recognise that Covid-19 is presenting many challenges for universities, and we are keen to be flexible and supportive whilst ensuring that standards are maintained. Anyone with queries related to either continued accreditation of programmes in light of changes in response to Covid-19 or future accreditation activity is advised to contact their accrediting professional engineering institution, but may also contact the Engineering Council accreditation team by emailing accreditation@engc.org.uk.

Consultations

OFFICE FOR STUDENTS: Consultation on the higher education admissions system in England

You'll no doubt be aware that OfS consultations are currently paused, but in response to both the pending consultation and the uncertainty around this year's university admissions the EPC is conducting a one-off [admissions survey](#) (in addition to our annual temperature check of the health of HE engineering enrolments which will take a light touch this Autumn).

With the triple whammy of curbed international student imports, squeezed budgets and student number controls weighing down on HE engineering portfolios, we know that the HE engineering sector needs to know more... urgently. An engineering admissions profile will give our members an insight into how our sector manages admissions, the benefit of understanding what our peers are doing, and an opportunity to share best practice. The EPC will also play a critical role in carefully evidencing HE engineering's collective admissions behaviour in order to inform future policy responses in the interests of engineering.

Please complete the survey [here](#). You can view all questions [here](#) before you begin. A summary of the paused OfS consultation is available [here](#).

WORLD FEDERATION OF ENGINEERING ORGANISATIONS (WFEO): IEA Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies Framework

UNESCO and the World Federation of Engineering Organisations (WFEO) recognise the International Engineering Alliance (IEA) Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies Framework (GAPC) as a valuable international benchmark for engineering education. IEA monitor the various accords (Washington, Sydney and Dublin) and these competencies are the IEA's version of the Engineering Council's Learning Outcomes and UK-SPEC competences.

The current IEA Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies Framework has been reviewed to ensure that they reflect contemporary values and employer needs as well as equip engineers/technologist/technicians of the future to incorporate the practices that advance the UN Sustainable Goals.

As a result, there are a number of changes to future engineering competencies within the IEA Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies Framework being consulted on at the moment. You can see and comment on them [here](#). It is currently expected that changes will be proposed at

IEAM 2021 in June next year. Therefore, it is important to be aware of what is emerging at this stage so that you can input views if there are aspects that are particularly welcome, missing or in need of further work.

Opportunities

THIS IS ENGINEERING: This is Engineering Day 2020

The second This is Engineering Day will take place during Tomorrow's Engineers week on Wednesday 4th November 2020. Following the huge support received for This is Engineering Day 2019, the Royal Academy of Engineering is calling on as many people as possible to get involved this year to help reach an even wider audience.

Under the theme of 'Be The Difference', they'll be showcasing all the ways that engineering shapes the world for the better as we all continue to transform the image of engineering. We want to show more young people, from all backgrounds, what a difference they can make if they choose engineering.

If you're an engineer, work for an engineering organisation, or in any way benefit from engineering, please get in touch with [the team](#) to discuss how you can support the day.

THIS IS ENGINEERING: Image Pledge

As part of the Royal Academy of Engineering-led campaign to alter the public perception of Engineering, an 'image pledge' has been developed in order to help create a more positive and diverse visual representation of engineers on internet search engines. The EPC and its members are invited to commit to this campaign by signing the Royal Academy of Engineering image pledge to make engineering more representative of the society it serves.

To offer guidance on how to make good images of engineering more visible online, the Royal Academy of Engineering have created a helpful 'how to' guide. You can also help by sharing your more representative images of engineers and engineering.

You'll find more detail on the [Royal Academy of Engineering website](#).



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