Engineering Gateways work-based degrees: challenges and opportunities

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Engineering Gateways degrees

- Flexible work-based pathways to becoming professionally qualified
- For employees aspiring to IEng or CEng; enrol on a degree MSc Professional Engineering/Bachelors
- Learning and professional development integrated, rooted in workplace activity
- An initial audit, negotiated learning, learning 'contract', development plan
- Academic supervisor, workplace mentor, professional engineering institution (PEI) advice
- Employers' direct input to an individual's further learning and professional development to IEng/CEng

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Engineering Gateways degrees

- Development phase from 2006
- Involvement of the profession: initially 3 PEIs, by 2012 there were 15
- Initially offered by 4 HEIs; 3 more by 2012; now 12 offering/near to offering
- Range of employers including SMEs; must be able to provide appropriate activity (level)
- No change in the required standard or rigour of process
- An *additional* pathway to registration
- Several MSc graduates, first few have achieved CEng

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Some of the benefits

- No loss of workforce, compensates for fee
- Flexible, negotiated model fits with conflicting work pressures
- Employers report positive impact on the business
- Achieves a qualified workforce
- Engineering Council-backed, UK-SPEC is central
- PEI closely involved; review individual's plans early stage
- Gain a degree and well prepared for Professional Review
- Links to e-portfolios, in-company PD planning etc
- Builds on links with industry (and FE Colleges?), provides pathway for alumni

Cost-effective course for busy engineers, that can be tuned to individual requirements which examines and re-examines the workplace and work done. An adopter university

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Providers' critical success factors

- Ability to support WB degrees

- Cross referencing with UK-SPEC

- Robust documentation, templates etc

- Engage with employers early on, set expectations, responsibilities

- Mentoring arrangements, PEI engagement

- Resource requirement mitigated by careful planning, securing sustainable markets

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Challenges to implementation

- Securing internal validation – *involve industry*

- Finding suitable External Examiner

- Meeting university structural and QA requirements – *gain understanding at a senior level early on*

- Tracking and monitoring students - *take advantage of providers' experience*

- Employer engagement, not the 'normal' target audience - *take it to them early*

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Toolkit to support potential adopters

http://gatewaystoolkit.engc.org.uk

- A route map, but the order is not prescriptive

- Needed to be applicable to range of providers – questions and prompts

- Strongly influenced by the adopters and providers

- Providers mentored the adopters – an excellent model

- Much sharing of resources, resource bank can be added to

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Any questions?

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http://www.engc.org.uk/education--skills/engineering-gateways