

The Washington Accord Past, Present, Future

IEET Accreditation Training
Taipei: September 2011

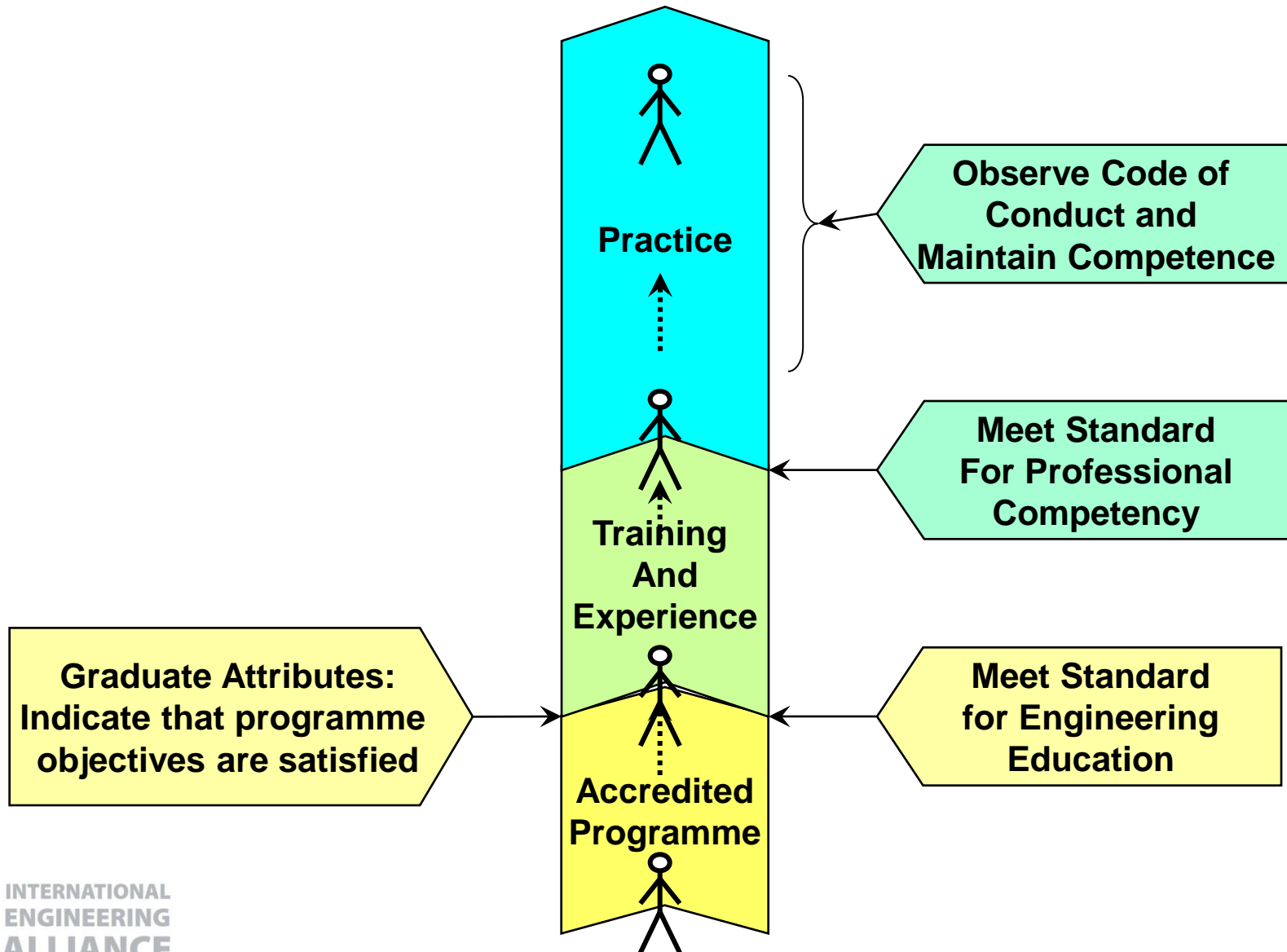
Hu Hanrahan

Objectives

1. Introduction to the Washington Accord and its future development
2. What are the WA Graduate Attributes?
3. What are the WA's expectations of the signatories with regard to the Graduate Attributes
4. Why accreditation team leaders of the signatories should have understanding of the WA Graduate Attributes

1: Introduction to the Washington Accord and its future development

Context: Engineering Professional Lifecycle



What is Professional Competence?

- Professional Engineers are able to perform functions because of their:
 - Knowledge,
 - Skills, and
 - Attitudes
- Competence is developed by
 - Education,
 - Training, and
 - Experience

The Washington Accord Agreement recognises that:

“Accreditation of engineering academic programs is a key foundation for the practice of engineering at the professional level in each of the countries or territories covered by the Accord.”

History of the Washington Accord

| 1989 -1994: Initial Phase | 1995-2006 Initial Expansion | 2007-present: Structured Development |
|--|--|--|
| Signatories: UK, Ireland, USA Canada, Australia, New Zealand | Hong Kong, South Africa Japan, Singapore, | Chinese Taipei, Korea, Malaysia, Turkey |
| Original Rules and Procedures | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2007 Educational Accords Rules and Procedures • 2011 Educational Accords Rules and Procedures |
| Substantial Equivalence of Accreditation Criteria | 2001-2005: Developing The Graduate Attributes (GA) | 2007: GA are exemplars 2011: GA to become standards |
| WA Secretariat Provided by a Volunteer Signatory | | 2007 International Engineering Alliance Secretariat |

Washington Accord: Status in Accord

- **Signatory:** A body entitled to fully participate in the Accord, enjoys the same rights and obligations as all other signatories. The body must be:
 - independent of the academic institutions delivering accredited or recognised programs within their jurisdiction.
 - An authority, agency or institution representative of the engineering profession that has legal or recognised authority to accredit programs
- **Provisional Status:** A body that has demonstrated that it has an accreditation / recognition system conceptually similar to signatories
 - Has none for the rights or duties of signatories.

Washington Accord: Mutual Recognition

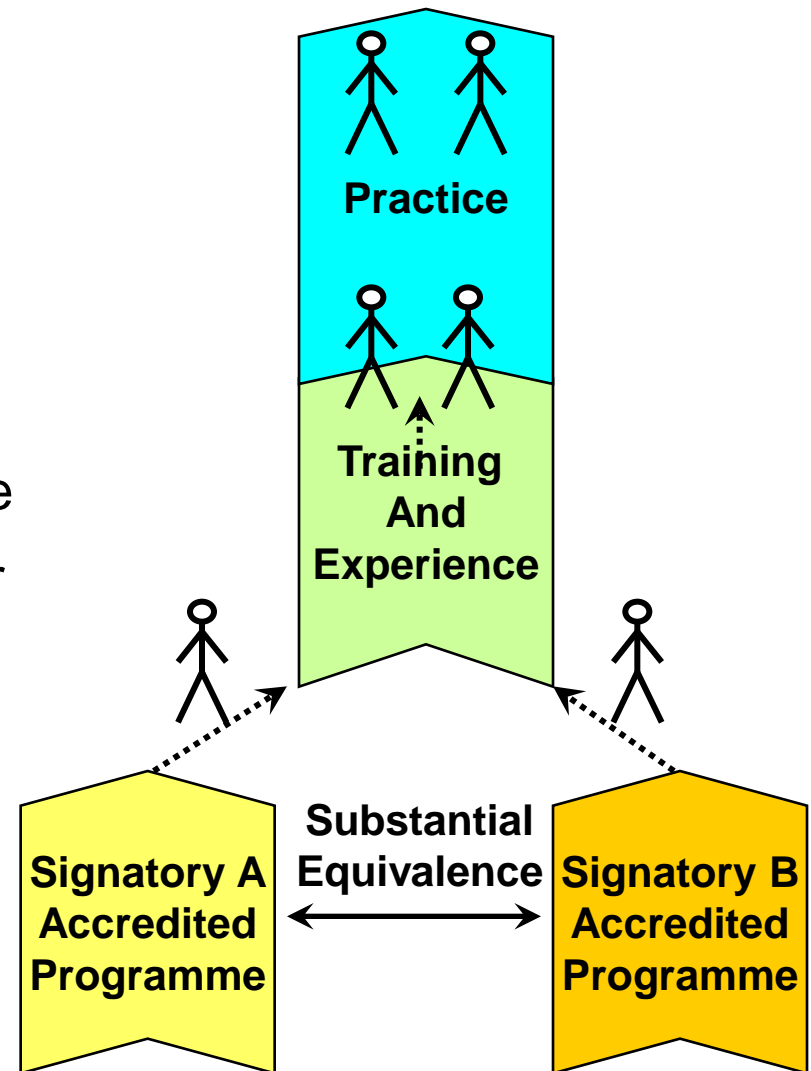
Agreement states:

- Accreditation criteria, policies and procedures of the signatories have been verified comparable
- Accreditation decisions made by one signatory are acceptable to the other signatories
- Recognition applies only to accreditations conducted within the signatory's national or territorial boundaries, except:
 - Offshore programmes offered by university with programs accredited in home territory
 - A designated signatory accredits in a developing countries where there is no capacity to operate an accrediting body

Basis for Recognition Substantial Equivalence

Definition in Graduate Attributes:

Substantial equivalence: applied to educational programmes means that two programmes, while not meeting a single set of criteria, are both acceptable as preparing their respective graduates to enter formative development toward registration.



Washington Accord: Benchmarking

Agreement states:

- The Signatories will identify and encourage the implementation of best practice for the academic preparation of engineers
 - by mutual monitoring
 - regular communication and sharing of information:
 - accreditation criteria, systems, procedures, manuals, publications
 - lists of accredited programs;
 - invitations to observe accreditation visits; and invitations to observe meetings of any boards
- Regular monitoring through six-yearly visits now required

Washington Accord: Provisional Status

- Application for Signatory Status will be preceded by a prescribed period of Provisional Status
- Applicants for provisional status must be nominated by two signatories, (who have usually mentored the applicant)
- Acceptance as provisional by a two-thirds majority of signatories.
- Admission requires that the body has an accreditation system:
- Substantial equivalence is not required for provisional status: the provisional may need to develop criteria, policies and procedures
- Mentoring continues during provisional status

Washington Accord: Becoming a Signatory

- Normal minimum period as provisional is two years
- A provisional that is ready to apply for signatory status requests a verification visit
- Application must be supported by two signatories
- Visit takes place
- Visit must demonstrate substantial equivalence of:
 - Accreditation standard to the Graduate Attributes
 - Policies and processes to be substantially equivalent
- Visit report is considered at a general meeting
- Admission of a new signatory requires unanimous approval

Duties of Signatories

- Attend General Meetings of the Washington Accord
- Receive a review visit every six years
- Provide Evaluators for:
 - Reviews of other signatories
 - Verification visits to provisionals applying to be signatory
- Mentor new applicants and provisionals
- Make list of accredited programmes available
- Publish a clear statement of programmes that it recognises
- When registering body is separate, make every effort to ensure that registering body recognises signatories' programmes.

Expansion of the Washington Accord

- Provisional Status
 - India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Germany, Russia
- Europe
 - EUR ACE: an agreement between 17 bodies in Europe to award EUR ACE Labels in addition to national accreditation
 - Comparison of Washington/Sydney Accord Graduate Attributes with EUR ACE Framework Standards in progress
 - Objective: Working toward recognition agreement
- Developing Countries, assisted by a Signatory
 - IPENZ: South Pacific
 - ECSA: Namibia, Botswana

IEA Accord Projects

- Ongoing development of the Graduate Attributes and Professional Competencies
- Implementation of 2011 rules and procedures
 - Includes the adoption of the Graduate Attributes
 - Gap analysis: IEA graduate attributes and national standards
- Glossary of Terms
 - Expansion of definitions in the GA&PC document
 - General definitions of terms
 - Finding common terms for the comparison with EUR ACE Standards

Washington Accord in the IEA

- Prior to 2007, each agreement provided its own secretariat by a signatory volunteering for the task
 - Abet Inc provided the WA Secretariat
- In 2007, six agreements signed the Multipart Agreement to establish the International Engineering Alliance to provide a Secretariat
- IPENZ awarded the contract to operate the Secretariat 2007-2012

Conclusion

- The Washington Accord is an independent agreement for:
 - Mutual recognition of accredited engineering programmes
 - Benchmarking standards for engineering education
 - The WA Graduate Attributes represent the generally agreed reference for accredited programmes
 - Benchmarking accreditation policies and processes
- The WA has grown from a small group of signatories to a well-structured and sought-after organisation