



Policies and Procedures for CCPE Substantial Equivalency Evaluations

Introduction

The Canadian Council of Professional Engineers (CCPE) is the national organization of the provincial and territorial associations that regulate the profession of engineering in Canada. In Canada, each province and territory requires legislatively that engineers obtain registration where they intend to perform services. The individual Associations/Ordre are autonomous and are responsible for registration of engineers in their province or territory. Although CCPE has no authority over its constituent members, it works co-operatively with them to ensure the highest standard of engineering education, professional qualifications and ethical conduct.

Evaluations of university engineering education programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in Canada are conducted by the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB), a standing committee of CCPE, upon request by institutions granting the degree. If a program meets the accreditation criteria, it is granted the label of CEAB-Accredited Program. Graduates of accredited programs are deemed to meet the academic requirements for registration in one of the Canadian associations without having to pass technical exams.

A request to conduct such an evaluation outside Canada will also be considered by CCPE and these evaluations follow similar policies and procedures used for accreditation within Canada. In the case where an institution outside Canada wants to have a program recognized on a substantial equivalency basis, a specific request should be addressed to the Secretary, CEAB at CCPE who will submit the request to CEAB, the standing committee of CCPE responsible for Substantial Equivalency Assessment. When considering the request from a given country, the CEAB has the responsibility to ensure that such a request does not interfere with any current negotiations, existing agreements with the partners of CCPE on the international scene or is based on unacceptable standards at the international level. In particular, no consideration will be given to a request for the evaluation of programs that do not meet already accepted standards in multi-lateral forums, such as a minimum number of 16 years of schooling prior to the granting of a bachelor level or equivalent diploma.

While these evaluations follow similar policies and procedures used for accreditation, no accreditation action will be taken, nor will there be any inference that a program is undergoing accreditation or will be accredited as a result of such a review. "Substantial equivalency" means comparable in program content and educational experience, but such programs may not be

absolutely identical. It implies reasonable confidence that the graduates possess the academic competencies needed to begin professional practice at the entry level.

As a general rule, the CCPE will review programs offered in any language provided that documentation can be provided in either English or French and that a sufficient number of people in charge of the program can express themselves reasonably well in one of these two languages. Informal translation assistance during the visit has proven to be very useful in many circumstances.

It should be recognized that the individual members chosen to comprise an international visiting team are acting on behalf of the CCPE and the engineering profession as a whole. The team members are also acting as representatives of Canada and its culture. They carry a serious responsibility at a high professional level. They are expected to provide knowledge concerning engineering, careful preparation and skill to determine relevant facts, sound judgment, and breadth of outlook in order to understand the institution's objectives and the relation of these objectives to the unique environmental and cultural context within which the institution operates. They are expected to maintain a full sense of responsibility to the welfare of the institution, and that of CCPE, and to their own professional ideals. International visiting team members must be prepared to give time and effort to their task, but expect to find the international evaluation activity to be a challenging, stimulating and rewarding experience.

PROCEDURES:

Applicable Documents

Except as noted in this document and as necessary to adapt to local conditions, international evaluations will be guided by the criteria and procedures for accrediting Canadian engineering education programs as published in the most recent CEAB report and will follow the Foreign Visit Policy_for international representation of CCPE as well as the procedures for initiation and formation of the visiting team as outlined in this document.

Process Initiation

An institution wishing to have (a) program(s) reviewed may request such review in writing to the Secretary, CEAB at CCPE. The Secretary, CEAB will consult with the Chair of the CEAB, to recommend on whether to proceed further with the application. The final decision to proceed will be made by the CEAB Chair and CEAB Secretary, ensuring that such a request does not interfere with any current negotiations, existing agreements with the partners of CCPE on the international scene or is based on unacceptable standards at the international level. CEAB will ratify the decision to proceed or not to proceed at its next meeting following the decision.

If the decision is to proceed, the international team to represent CCPE shall then be constituted by the Chair of the CEAB working with the CEAB Secretary. The Secretary, CEAB shall ensure that relevant information is given to the host institution and advise that the self-study questionnaire must be completed and returned to the Secretary, CEAB no later than two months prior to the date of the on-site visit.

CCPE recommends that the institution arrange, through the Secretary, CEAB, for a preliminary visit by a representative of the CEAB selected in accordance with the Foreign Visit Policy of the CCPE and the attached “Selection of International Program Evaluators and Visitors” (Appendix I), prior to submitting a formal request for a review. The purpose of such a visit would be to discuss any questions regarding the criteria for a substantial equivalency evaluation, the visit process, the documentation required and other issues. Based on the results of the preliminary visit, CCPE may recommend that the visit be cancelled or deferred. If requested, CCPE can also arrange to provide a workshop on the process and how to complete the documentation to the institution. The costs associated with a preliminary visit or workshop are borne by the institution in accordance with the fee schedule listed in Appendix II.

Selection of Visiting Team

The CEAB is jointly responsible to assign the full visiting team for the visit. Following acceptance of a specific request, the CEAB Chair, with the advice from the CEAB Secretary, will jointly propose the visiting team chair and visiting team membership. The appointed team chair and vice-chair should normally be current CEAB members. The Secretary, CEAB will advise the institution of the make-up of the team. Insofar as possible, selection shall be made from the current list of experienced CEAB evaluators and CEAB members. Guidance for the selection of qualified persons to serve as members of international visiting teams is given in Appendix I. The Secretary, CEAB will ensure that there is no conflict of interest for any visitor.

Normally there will be one program evaluator for each program to be evaluated plus a team chair and vice-chair. The team will consist of at least three members. In situations where the country is developing its own accreditation system, the country may wish to request additional accreditation experts, typically drawn from the CEAB, to accompany the team in an advisory or training role. The associated costs will be borne by the institution.

Evaluation Process

To the extent possible, the team chair will follow visit procedures applicable to CEAB accreditation visits with due consideration given to the cultural sensitivities and unique circumstances of the institution being evaluated. The evaluation process will include completion of a self-study questionnaire by the institution being visited, an on-site visit lasting a minimum of three days, an exit interview, and a report to the institution. The on-site visit will be scheduled at a time mutually convenient for the visiting team and the host institution. The team chair, in cooperation with the Dean of Engineering or equivalent officer of the host institution, will establish the agenda for the visit.

At least thirty days prior to the planned visit, the Secretary, CEAB will provide each visitor with information about the country to be visited from a credible source, such as the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, including precautions and guidance as to personal safety and health, e.g. recommended/required vaccinations.

The host institution must agree a priori that each visitor will be given the freedom to make travel arrangements that best fit his/her schedule and geographic location without incurring unreasonable expenditures to the host institution. CCPE staff and the host institution will make all necessary logistical arrangements.

Team members will be available to make presentations to the faculty and students on topics related to the activities of the CCPE.

Observers may be invited to accompany the visiting team, normally for intense international training, with the approval of the Chair of the CEAB. The CEAB will fund such observers, as appropriate, not the institution.

Reports

Within three weeks after the completion of the visit, each evaluator will submit a written report to the team chair. The team chair, working with the team members, will be responsible for compiling a complete report of the team's findings which includes: perceived strengths and weaknesses, areas of conformance to and deviation from the CEAB criteria as interpreted by the visiting team, matters of concern (both for the present and for the future) and suggestions for improvement, if any. No recommendations as to CCPE "substantial equivalency" or accreditation are included in the report.

The report will be reviewed and edited by the CEAB Executive Committee and submitted by the CEAB Secretariat to the institution for comment and reaction and to ensure accuracy and completeness. This also provides an opportunity for the institution to advise on improvements being made in the current academic year. Any comments submitted by the institution will be given to the Team Chair for comment. Upon advice from the CEAB, the Secretary, CEAB may communicate with both the institution and the visiting team chair with the intent of ensuring that the program dossier is complete.

Evaluation Actions

The decision as to "substantial equivalency" is made by the CEAB as the result of information gained from the visit process. In arriving at its decision following a visit, the CEAB considers selected information from the completed questionnaire, the visiting team report, the institution's response to the visiting team report, any further clarifying correspondence and any other relevant information. The visiting team chair will present the report to a meeting of the CEAB. The Dean (or the Dean's designate) of the institution being evaluated is invited to attend

that portion of the CEAB meeting devoted to the presentation of the visiting team report. After all the information has been presented, the Dean leaves the meeting while the CEAB makes a decision. Expenses of the team chair and the representative from the institution to attend the CEAB meeting are borne by the institution.

The letter to the institution detailing the decisions and reasons for the decisions is prepared by the CEAB and given to the Secretary, CEAB. The Secretary, CEAB prepares a covering letter elaborating on the decision and sends the package to the institution.

"Substantial Equivalency" of a program will be granted for a period, usually three to six years. The period of substantial equivalency will be subject to review for cause at any time during that period. "Substantial Equivalency" status will be granted if current conditions are judged to meet or exceed the minimum requirements. The name of any program granted substantial equivalency will be published in the current version of the CEAB report "Accreditation Criteria and Procedures" in the section "Substantially Equivalent Programs".

A year prior to the end of the term of recognition, the Secretary, CEAB will advise the host institution that a return visit and a substantial equivalency evaluation will be necessary in order for the recognition to remain in effect.

Confidentiality

Information supplied by the institution is for the confidential use of the visiting team, the CEAB, and the CCPE Headquarters and will not be disclosed without the specific written permission of the Institution concerned. The statements to the institution are confidential. Direct quotations in whole or in part from any statement is not authorized. Correspondence and reports between the CEAB and the institution are confidential documents and should be released only to authorized personnel of the institution. Wherever institutional policy or government laws require the release of a confidential document, the entire document must be released. In any case, the Visiting Team Report must not be released to the public as it is a working document and does not form part of the decision letter.

Public Release

Programs deemed "substantially equivalent" will be listed in CCPE public documents and communicated to interested parties, as appropriate, for as long as the period of recognition remains in effect. The length of the recognition period is not published and is confidential between the institution and CCPE. Because "substantial equivalency" is program specific, all statements made by the institution regarding "substantial equivalency" must refer only to those programs that are evaluated as "substantially equivalent".

Fee Schedule

It is CCPE policy that the "substantially equivalent" evaluation process will normally be self-sustaining financially from fees charged to the requesting institution. Within its international mandate however, either determined by the Board of Directors of CCPE or specific requests from the Canadian government, it is possible that a portion of the total costs may be borne by other sources.

The fee schedule for international visits is given in Appendix II and is subject to change.

To comply with Revenue Canada laws, all payments will be made to the CCPE, which will in turn reimburse visitors for travel expenses.

Appendix I

Selection of International Program Evaluators and Visitors

The CEAB will maintain a list of qualified persons to serve as members of international visiting teams.

The CEAB will be guided by the following parameters in selecting persons for the visiting team.

1. Demonstrated competence in the discipline
2. Demonstrated interest and experience in international activities.
3. Competence in engineering education and accreditation.
4. Experience in engineering, including international experience.
5. Experience in accreditation matters as a program visitor or member of the CEAB.
6. Commitment to a high level of professional responsibility and practice.

Evaluators should have an understanding of the nature of international evaluations, combined with the ability to understand the institution's objectives and the relation of these objectives to the environment and unique national culture in which the particular institution operates.

Appendix II

Fee Schedule

The following fee schedule will apply to "substantial equivalency" international visits.

1. Travel expenses for all visitors, including hotel, meals, transportation and incidentals, such as cost of passports, visas, and laundry while traveling. Airfare will be at the business class level and ground transportation, such as railroad will be first class. Similar travel expenses associated with a preliminary visit must also be covered by the institution.
2. An administrative fee that covers the direct and indirect costs of both the preliminary visit and the formal visit for all programs evaluated during the same visit as well as the publication and distribution of an annual listing of "substantially equivalent" programs will normally be charged. Typical fees are in the order of \$5000 CDN. Many circumstances may however affect this policy and the administration fee will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

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