



ENGINEERS  
AUSTRALIA

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# Guidelines on Articulation

NATIONAL ARTICULATION COMMITTEE

*October 2018*

# 1.

## Background

Engineers Australia recognises three occupational categories in the engineering workforce.

They are **Professional Engineer, Engineering Technologist, and Engineering Associate.**

Competency Standards have been developed by Engineers Australia for each of these categories. The standards cover the knowledge base and enabling competencies normally gained through an accredited educational qualification and the practice competencies gained in the workplace. Stage 1 refers to the knowledge base and enabling competencies deemed adequate for entry to professional practice. Stage 2 is the application of Stage 1 in practice: it includes Stage 1 and refers to the full range of abilities expected of an experienced practitioner. It is not possible to be recognised as Stage 2 competent without demonstration of Stage 1 competency.

Articulation is primarily concerned with achievement of Stage 1 Competency. The Stage 1 Competency Standards for the three occupational categories can be found by following the link to “Program accreditation overview” from:

[engineersaustralia.org.au/about-us/program-accreditation](http://engineersaustralia.org.au/about-us/program-accreditation)

The Stage 2 Competency Standards are also available on Engineers Australia’s website.

**The basic qualifications that satisfy Stage 1 Competency are:**

1. **Professional Engineer:** accredited four-year Australian Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) degree or accredited Australian Master of Engineering degree
2. **Engineering Technologist:** accredited three-year Australian Bachelor of Engineering Technology or Engineering Science degree
3. **Engineering Associate:** accredited two-year Australian (AQF) Advanced Diploma or Associate Degree.

*Persons holding overseas qualifications acceptable under the Washington, Sydney, and Dublin Accords are also deemed to have satisfied Stage 1 Competencies for the categories of Professional Engineer, Engineering Technologist, and Engineering Associate respectively. Lists of recognised programs can be obtained via the respective Accord websites.*

**Those who do not fit into any of the three categories need to undertake a Stage 1 Assessment as stipulated in Section 3.**

## 2.

### Articulation

Articulation is the process of transferring from one occupational category to another – normally from Engineering Technologist to Professional Engineer or from Engineering Associate to Engineering Technologist. It can also be applied to Affiliates of Engineers Australia wishing to become recognised in one of the three occupational categories.

Members might also articulate directly from Engineering Associate to Professional Engineer, although this is a more arduous and difficult pathway.

The most direct way to achieve the Stage 1 Competencies required for articulation is by completing the basic qualification for the relevant category. Some educational institutions offer programs specially designed for the purpose of articulation. Completion of a program accredited by Engineers Australia automatically satisfies the relevant Stage 1 Competency.

Candidates for articulation often feel that their work experience has enabled them to develop and demonstrate most of the practice competencies associated with the category to which they aspire, ie their target category. However, they must also demonstrate Stage 1 Competency – the breadth and depth of knowledge and enabling skills appropriate to that category. Without the relevant educational qualification, demonstration of Stage 1 competency can be difficult. It is certainly possible to develop extensive knowledge in ways other than a formal educational program, for example through experiential learning and self-study, but it has proved unusual for such pathways to provide the full range of Stage 1 Competencies, for example in the natural and physical sciences.

Despite their years of experience, many candidates for articulation need to undertake some further academic study to fully develop their Stage 1 Competencies.

## 3.

### Direct assessment of stage 1 competencies

Notwithstanding the above, Members who consider they have already achieved the full range of Stage 1 Competencies for their target category by a combination of experience in the workplace and programs of learning may apply for assessment independent of the articulation process.

For details of the procedure for the direct assessment of Stage 1 Competencies refer to [the “Stage 1 Guide” found by following links from “Assessments of Qualifications and Competencies.”](#)

Candidates for articulation often feel that their work experience has enabled them to develop and demonstrate most of the practice competencies associated with the category to which they aspire, ie their target category.

# 4.

## The National Articulation Committee

The National Articulation Committee's primary role is to approve arrangements whereby members of Engineers Australia may articulate from one category to another. Assistance to individual members is provided by the National Manager Articulation, who chairs the Committee and consults with it as necessary. The Committee and the Manager work together to provide achievable and clearly defined pathways for articulation.

The requirements set by the National Articulation Committee are consistent with Engineers Australia's

membership of several international agreements on equivalences and mobility. All matters of professional standards and qualifications are constantly benchmarked against best practice in other countries.

The Committee encourages educational institutions to offer programs suitable for articulation purposes and contributes to the wider debate on matters affecting articulation such as the status of Engineering Technologists and Engineering Associates.

# 5.

## Individual articulation programs

Stage 1 Competency required for articulation may be achieved by completing a basic qualification accredited by Engineers Australia in the target category, with whatever credit the offering university may allow for the candidate's existing qualifications. In many cases this may be the most efficient route. A complete list of accredited programs, updated regularly, can be found by following the link at: [engineersaustralia.org.au/about-us/program-accreditation](http://engineersaustralia.org.au/about-us/program-accreditation)

Individual University Engineering Faculties should be contacted for advice on credit transfer and recognition of prior learning.

Articulation candidates should be aware that completion of a non-accredited academic program in engineering does not guarantee articulation. Some Engineering Faculties offer programs, particularly at graduate level (Certificates, Diplomas and Masters), that are not accredited. Before undertaking any study program with the aim of achieving articulation candidates should check its accreditation standing.

Candidates who do not see completion of an accredited degree program as suited to their particular circumstances may seek to negotiate a personal plan

of academic study with the Committee. For example, it could be that the maximum credit or advanced standing allowable in a degree program does not fully recognise a candidate's existing knowledge, which may have been attained in a variety of ways including experiential learning. The Committee may be prepared to approve a more specific study plan provided that the candidate can present acceptable evidence of prior learning (see Recognition of Prior Learning at 5.3 below).

Such a study plan will recognise and build on existing qualifications and experience to achieve Stage 1 competency in the target category as quickly and directly as possible. The program must demonstrate an integrated approach to knowledge development.

Approval of an individual articulation plan guarantees (on completion) recognition of Stage 1 Competency and provides eligibility for Graduate Membership of Engineers Australia in the target category.

The following guidelines apply for articulation candidates who have been carrying out the responsibilities of their current occupational category for at least five years.

# 5.1

## Articulation from Engineering Technologist to Professional Engineer

A key element of any articulation pathway to Professional Engineer is that candidates explicitly develop the ability to approach advanced applications from a theoretical as well as a practical viewpoint. Accredited programs ensure that this is achieved. Individual study plans therefore require demonstration of a strong grounding in the mathematics and engineering sciences underpinning their chosen field, and the Committee's advice and approvals are designed to ensure this.

Particular attention is drawn to the Master of Engineering Practice program offered by the University of Southern Queensland. That program has been developed specifically for articulation purposes and is fully accredited by Engineers Australia. The program is available in distance mode and has highly-developed processes for recognition of prior learning and individual program design. Candidates may obtain credit for up to 50% of the program through the submission of Portfolios. Students are encouraged to frame their Portfolios consistent with the requirements for Stage 2 Competency Assessment, which they may later wish to undertake for Chartered status.

For a personal study plan, the normal framework is an engineering Masters program provided by an academic institution that offers at least some programs accredited by Engineers Australia in the Professional Engineer category. Many Masters programs offer a wide range of study units that can be taken singly. For candidates who can demonstrate substantial prior learning, the Committee may be prepared to accept a subset of such

units – and possibly selected Bachelor of Engineering units – to form a personal study plan. Candidates who have a clear understanding of their career objectives may submit units from more than one university, on a “mix and match” basis. The key requirement in all cases is that the plan be designed to build on the candidate's existing background to achieve the Stage 1 competencies of a Professional Engineer.

The Committee will not normally accept a study plan based on a Masters degree that falls outside accepted engineering disciplines. For example, Design Science, Engineering Management, Systems Engineering, or Project Management programs are not normally recognised as suitable frameworks since they do not contribute sufficiently on their own to the required breadth and depth of foundation knowledge in science, mathematics and engineering. For similar reasons graduate programs by research only are also not recognised for articulation purposes.

To be accepted for articulation, it is essential to secure the Committee's formal approval before embarking on any personal study plan. Retrospective approval cannot be guaranteed. Approval remains valid for five years and must then be re-confirmed or re-negotiated, taking into account any changes to articulation requirements.

Completion of a personal study plan approved by the Committee for articulation may not satisfy the university's requirements for the award of a degree. Candidates may, of course, see value in taking additional units and formally completing the degree.

## 5.2

### Articulation from Engineering Associate to Engineering Technologist

Particular attention is drawn to the program offered by the University of Southern Queensland for Engineering Associates that has been developed specifically for articulation purposes. The program is designed to lead to the fully accredited Bachelor of Engineering Science for those wishing to exit as Engineering Technologists, and the fully accredited Master of Engineering Practice for those wishing to become Professional Engineers. The program is available in distance mode and has highly-developed processes for Recognition of Prior Learning.

The normal framework for a personal study plan is an accredited BEngTech or BEngSc program. For candidates who can demonstrate substantial prior learning, the Committee may be prepared to accept a subset of units from within such a program to form a personal study plan. Candidates who have a clear understanding of their career objectives may submit units from more than one institution, on a “mix and match” basis.

The key requirement in all cases is that the plan be designed to build on the candidate’s existing

background to achieve the Stage 1 competencies of an Engineering Technologist.

Management or Project Management programs are not recognised as suitable frameworks for articulation purposes since they do not contribute sufficiently to the required foundation knowledge in science, mathematics and engineering.

To be accepted for articulation, it is essential to secure the Committee’s formal approval before embarking on any personal study plan. Retrospective approval cannot be guaranteed. Approval remains valid for five years and must then be re-confirmed or re-negotiated, taking into account any changes to articulation requirements.

Completion of a personal study plan approved by the Committee for articulation may not satisfy the academic institution’s requirements for the award of a degree. Candidates may, of course, see value in taking additional units and formally completing the degree.

## 5.3

### Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Once a degree program has been identified that would meet a candidate’s articulation objective, the candidate may be able to demonstrate prior learning equivalent to one or more units of that program. To do so they must present tangible evidence that they have satisfactorily attained the learning outcomes specified for the unit or units for which RPL is sought. Learning outcomes are normally declared in University or TAFE course/subject/unit outline documents.

Evidence to support a claim for RPL could include:

1. Specific work activities and units of study undertaken. These should be presented in the form of a portfolio specifically addressing the relevant learning outcomes and including copies of any certificates gained;
2. an oral assessment/interview that allows the applicant to demonstrate the achievement of the specified learning outcomes;
3. a challenge test to show that the applicant has met the specified learning outcomes.

Candidates wishing to claim RPL must gain approval from the Committee at the time that their personal study plan is negotiated.

# 5.4

## Affiliates

Affiliate Members of Engineers Australia are not eligible for membership in an occupational category but have an active interest in a branch of engineering or in a field of specialisation that may contribute to the activities of Engineers Australia.

Affiliate Members do not comply with the definition of Articulation since they are seeking to become members in an occupational category and not seeking to transfer between categories. Nevertheless, the Committee has undertaken to give as much assistance to Affiliates as possible.

Affiliates present significant challenges to the Articulation Committee since they come from a great diversity of occupations including Petroleum Geologists, Surveyors, Planners, Fire Safety Officers, Building Surveyors, and Scientists in various disciplines. They may also have very different and varied educational backgrounds. Due to this diversity the Committee has found it impossible to develop a dedicated pathway.

The Articulation Manager treats each case on its merits and negotiates personal study plans based on aspects of the more normal pathways offered in the previous sections to Engineering Associates and Engineering Technologists.

# 6.

## Operational details

The National Manager Articulation can only approve individual articulation programs for candidates who are already financial members of Engineers Australia and who are resident in Australia or who have approval to migrate to Australia. However, advice may be given to non-members who wish to determine their likely category or articulation possibilities prior to joining.

Any request for articulation assistance from an eligible candidate should be directed to the current Manager whose contact details are provided below.

Correspondence between an applicant for articulation and the Manager is normally by email. The usual process is for an applicant to provide the Manager with a CV, including details of all post-secondary academic studies and all work experience since qualifying in their present category. An exchange of emails follows during which the Manager may consult with the National Articulation Committee or some of its members to ensure that the Guidelines are being followed. In due course an agreed individual program of study is negotiated, including any RPL arrangements.

Once the program of study and RPL arrangements have been approved, the Manager notifies the applicant.

Details of the agreement are normally copied to any Division or Assessor that has been involved in the initial referral. The applicant is further advised that the agreement must be renegotiated after five years.

When a certified copy of the results from the approved program of study has been received by the Manager, and

any RPL submissions have been approved, the applicant is notified that Stage 1 Competency for the appropriate category has been demonstrated.

Following receipt of the notification that Stage 1 Competency has been achieved, the candidate applies for transfer of membership through the on-line Portal. The notification of successful articulation from the Articulation Manager must be included with the application. Assistance with the details may be obtained through Member Services.

The articulation process guarantees membership as a Graduate. However a Member application may be made in cases where substantial experience has been obtained at an appropriate level.

After successfully transferring membership to the target category, a candidate may wish to apply for Chartered status in that category and/or registration on the appropriate section of the National Engineering Registers. This may not be possible until some time after the articulation process during which Stage 2 competency in the new category has been demonstrated.

From time to time the Manager receives requests for assistance from members who have previously been assessed for migration purposes. Under such circumstances the case is discussed with the Migration Skills Assessment Unit and, based on those discussions and any other information supplied by the articulation candidate, the Manager arrives at a decision.



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## Contact

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