

Guidelines for Establishing Memoranda of Understanding with Quality Assurance Organizations Outside the United States of America

In keeping with the vision statement "to provide world leadership" and its intent to encourage the highest quality applied science, computing, engineering, and technology educational programs, ABET has authorized the International Activities Council (INTAC) to establish processes for mutual recognition of ABET-accredited programs in the United States and corresponding programs in other countries, and to assist other higher education agencies or organizations outside the United States in developing continuous quality assurance processes. Effective systems to accredit and monitor progress are essential to assure the level and quality of such programs.

INTAC receives frequent requests from various organizations outside of the United States typically seeking technical assistance in developing their accreditation systems. The underlying goal of these requests relates to entering into a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) with ABET¹ and/or becoming a signatory of the Washington Accord². The services requested of and generally provided by ABET include sharing of its experience in the field of accreditation, general information on its policies and procedures, criteria development seminars, evaluator training, observer visits, and other related activities. This exchange of services is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Entering into MOUs with appropriate higher education agencies or organizations in other countries is a mechanism to promote the continuing quality improvement of applied science, computing, engineering, and technology education.

ABET, through INTAC, will consider entering into a MOU with recognized higher education authorities or quality assurance organizations outside the United States subject to the following conditions and provided that there appear to be mutually advantageous outcomes:

1. The organization involved has established or is seeking to establish a profession-controlled, peer-review accreditation system for applied science, computing, engineering, or technology degree programs at institutions of higher education within the country.
2. The organization involved has received recognition, approval, and/or authorization of operating status from a national educational ministry, legislative mandate, or other appropriate authority (governmental or non-governmental).
3. The organization involved provides a mechanism whereby the professions related to the programs to be accredited have representation within its governance structure, and professional peers are involved in the accreditation process, including formulation of accreditation criteria, policies and procedures, and decisions about accreditation actions.

¹ See *Guidelines for Establishing Mutual Recognition Agreements with Quality Assurance Organizations Outside the United States of America*.

² See <http://www.washingtonaccord.org/>.

4. The organization involved recognizes and agrees that ABET may enter into other MOUs with other entities within the same country or region when judged appropriate by ABET.

In addition, the following restrictions apply to implementation of MOUs:

1. The organization involved must have or commit to establishing goals, objectives, criteria, policies, and procedures in educational quality assurance consistent with practice recognized by ABET.
2. The organization involved shall demonstrate a willingness to share studies, proposals, discussions, minutes of board/commission meetings, and accreditation policies and procedures; and, by mutual consent, agree to participate as observers in meetings and site visits, and contribute to the understanding of each other's system of accreditation.
3. Any financial commitment related to the implementation of the MOU must be specified in writing. All activities engaged in by ABET related to the implementation of MOUs must be cost neutral to ABET.
4. Any evaluations or consultations to be undertaken as a result of a given MOU will be completed in accordance with established ABET policies and procedures, insofar as possible. Due recognition will be given to different economic, cultural, environmental, political, and societal factors, as well as purely technical/educational matters.

The MOU shall include an exit clause whereby either entity may withdraw from the agreement with 30 days written notice.