

**Agreement on mutual recognition of accreditation decisions<sup>1</sup>  
between Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (CTI)  
and Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO)**

***Preamble***

Aiming to contribute to the internationalisation of higher education and to enhance the mobility of students and graduates in Europe;

with the purpose to facilitate the recognition of foreign qualifications by informing recognition authorities on the quality of these qualifications;

with the additional purpose of facilitating joint programmes and degrees by eliminating multiple accreditation procedures in different countries and implementing one procedure under supervision of one of the signatory agencies;

convinced that mutual recognition agreements between accreditation organisations enhance transparency in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and provide important information on the quality of foreign institutions and programmes for students, higher education institutions and the labour market;

relying on the work of the European Consortium for Accreditation in higher education (ECA) since 2003 to build up mutual trust between the member organisations;

based upon ECA's Agreement of Cooperation (2003), ECA's Code of Good Practice (2004), and the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (2005), ECA's Principles for the Selection of Experts (2005), ECA's Principles for Accreditation Procedures regarding Joint Programmes (2007), and ECA's Principles regarding Learning Outcomes in Accreditation Procedures (2009);

realising that the trust building activities leading to mutual recognition have increased mutual understanding, good practices and the validity of the work of the accreditation organisations;

taking into account the positive external evaluation results of the signing agencies and the results from in-depth comparisons and observations of their accreditation procedures and standards;

given the positive results of the previous mutual recognition agreement signed between the two agencies between 2007 and 2010;

acknowledging the variety of national higher education systems and accepting the existence of different legal prerequisites for accreditation procedures, standards and decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> In some countries the national legislation enables accreditation organisations to take legally binding accreditation decisions and to accept accreditation decisions of other accreditation organisations as their own. In some other countries this is not the case and mutual recognition may refer to "accreditation results" (the judgements made on the quality) rather than to "accreditation decisions" in a legal sense. It is up to the accreditation organisations to take into account the legal context in their respective countries and to decide whether in a certain agreement it is appropriate to use either "accreditation decisions" or "accreditation results". In both cases what is mutually recognised is the judgement on the quality. This mutual recognition agreement does not include consequences (e.g. funding) that may be connected to accreditation in a given national setting but that do not apply to foreign accreditations.

## Agreement

The signing accreditation organisations agree to regard their accreditation procedures, standards and decisions as free of significant differences;

and confirm that within their competences they accept the decisions of the accreditation procedures of the other signing accreditation organisation;

on the condition that the signing agencies continue to exchange information about their accreditation systems on a regular basis. Substantial changes of the accreditation systems should be communicated without delay.

The signing accreditation organisations agree to give each other access to all relevant documents relating to the accreditation decisions. Documents that are not published must be treated confidentially.

This agreement is valid for 3 years and can be extended after re-evaluation of the preset conditions.

Any of the signing accreditation organisations may denounce this agreement by written notification to the other party at any time. The written notification must include the reasons for and the date of the termination of this agreement.

Bernard Remaud  
Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (CTI)

Karl Dittrich  
Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO)

Signed on: 2 November 2010 in The Hague (the Netherlands)

## Clarification by CTI

- Accreditation by CTI refers to the accreditation of higher education engineering programmes and more specifically at master's level, i.e. Ingénieur diplômé.
- CTI is in charge of accrediting all engineering programmes in France at least every 6 years. Upon demand of higher education institutions,
- CTI is also entitled by the French law to perform accreditation of engineering programmes abroad.
- CTI is accredited by the European project EUR-ACE (European Association for Accreditation of Engineering Programmes) to award the EUR-ACE label to engineering programmes at the Master's level.

In order to perform its national and international missions, CTI takes accreditation decisions with reference to a specific framework, which is compatible with EURACE's system for accreditation of engineering education.

According to CTI's References and Orientations (2009) specific criteria and procedures may be formulated for the evaluation and accreditation of engineering programmes:

### Criteria

The higher education institutions are expected to update their programmes continuously in an ever changing context, but have to comply with the following four essential components of engineering education:

- A strong and broad basis in fundamental sciences in order to guarantee analytical competences and the capacity for adjusting in the long term to the demanding evolutions of the engineering and management activities.
- The engineering sciences provide a guarantee of efficiency and short term adaptation to a professional activity (experience and innovation).
- Business culture and economic, social, human, environmental ethics awareness (partnerships of the higher education institutions with the profession, involvement of professionals in training, internships in industry, entrepreneurship,...).
- Communication skills and international awareness (international partnerships, intercultural experiences, language skills, joint diploma, ...).

Fulfilment of these criteria is a condition for good employability in engineering activities.

The education is based on a coherent curriculum of 300 ECTS awarded in higher education.

### Procedure

- At least one representative of the engineering profession or of the industry is member of the external panel.