

Editorial

ENGINEERING DEGREES—INTERNATIONAL ARTICULATION MOVES

In the Engineering Education World News feature, we have repeatedly reported on the efforts of tertiary and not quite tertiary education institutions to upgrade their status. In the USA, engineering technology graduates have difficulties in registering as professional engineers. In Germany graduates of Fachhochschulen are unable to cross over directly to technical universities, without some backtracking. In Israel, droves of graduates from practical engineering colleges have been leaving the country for the USA in order to obtain a recognised Bachelor's Degree, unavailable to them after their engineering training in Israel. In Germany Bachelor and Master Degree schemes, some of them in English, are being piloted, primarily to keep in line with UK, USA and Australian successes in recruiting foreign students. Moreover, it has been apparent for some time that appropriate international recognition of German engineering degrees is problematical for foreign students returning to their homelands in Asia and Africa. Several models to resolve these problems are being applied. In addition to the German Bachelor-Master experiments, there is the Israeli solution (reported on in *Engineering Education World*). Tie-up with an American College or University, take in students who have professional degrees, charge a fee, and get them out with the coveted Bachelor qualification. This type of solution is possible, where tight national controls on degree programs do not exist, and a free market of private universities is in place. In the USA, rankings is a scheme classifying institutions, which, although giving the same formal degrees, may differ in the quality of education they are providing. Here every graduate has the same formal qualifications, and is at least not hampered by a degree title qualifying for a first job. However, the Engineering Technology, Fachhochschule and Practical Engineering graduates may be limited by the title, and by the lack of an articulation scheme. In fact the whole career track of non-university graduates in government positions in Germany is blocked at the top because their original degree is a professional degree from a tertiary education institution which does not have technical university status. The news from Denmark is that the education authorities are pressing home such an articulation system. Professional graduates can, in the new Danish scheme, continue and obtain university degrees. Universities resist the scheme. The higher degree institutions resist the opening up to competition that is being created. It is to be expected, however, that systems that do not have cross-over articulation models of higher education will not survive in the long run.

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