

An Overview of Outcome-Based Education (OBE)

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Abstract

There is a need to migrate from the traditional prescriptive-based and teacher-centered to an outcome-based education (OBE) approach in countries seeking to become full signatories of the Washington Accord (WA), and elsewhere. For mutual recognition to be accorded to graduates from a WA signatory by the other signatories (which is the main advantage of becoming a WA full signatory), graduates from accredited program in the country are expected to have achieved the twelve (12) WA Graduate Attributes (GAs) or exemplars of the graduates' profiles upon graduation. An accrediting body that aspires to be admitted as a full signatory of the WA must demonstrate that it has established an outcome-based accreditation (OBA) system, where the WA GAs shall become the main component of accreditation criteria for accreditation of any engineering program. The WA GAs encompass abilities in the knowledge, skills, and affective domains. The level of achievement of the attributes by the students must be demonstrated through valid or authentic assessment tools, and hence, OBE can be adopted to provide the correct approach. In 2009, Malaysia was admitted to the WA as a full signatory nation. Malaysia was admitted as a provisional member of the WA in 2003. This presentation shares the Malaysian experience, specifically with regard to OBE and OBA in the process to be admitted as a full signatory of the WA in 2009. It is hoped that Bangladesh can expedite the migration process and quickly elevate the accreditation system and the quality of engineering graduates to a higher level.



Prof. Wan Badaruzzaman is the chairman of the Smart & Sustainable Township Research Centre, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. He has vast professional and academic experience. He is currently a Washington Accord mentor for the BAETE (2017–present). Prof. Wan has been the director of the Engineering Accreditation Department (2014–2016), EAC Council member (2006), EAC associate director (Accreditation) (2006–2013), and BEM Accreditation Consultative Panel (2017–2018). He chaired the team that drafted the new EAC Outcome-Based Accreditation Manual 2006. Currently, he is an international/academic advisor and external examiner to several Malaysian universities. He sits on the Curriculum Board for Malaysian Polytechnics Courses and Training Programmes (2017–present) and is a Universiti Teknologi Petronas Accreditation Council member (2017–present). He was the founder and chief executive officer of UKM Perunding Kejuruteraan & Arkitek Sdn. Bhd. (2006–2011); deputy director of the Advanced Engineering Centre, UKM (1999–2000); and head of the Civil Engineering Department, UKM (2002–2005). Prof. Wan has been appointed as an external examiner for engineering programs at Sohar University, Oman (2013), and committee member, Civil Engineering Periodic Programme Review, Sohar University, Oman (2017). He has won many academic and research awards and has conducted many training workshops on accreditation and OBE for many universities in and outside Malaysia.