

ECSA renews Wits Mining School's accreditation

The Wits University School of Mining Engineering has been accredited for another five-year cycle by the Engineering Council of South Africa (ECSA).



Professor Cuthbert Musingwini, Wits University School of Mining

“This accreditation is a reassuring landmark for the school, indicating that our standards are remaining high and even improving. Just as importantly, it puts our graduates at an advantage when they enter the workplace – whether locally or globally – and when they wish to study further at other academic institutions elsewhere in the world,” Professor Cuthbert Musingwini, head of school says.

Internationally recognised

It allows graduates to register with ECSA firstly, as candidate engineers and later in their careers as professional engineers. Their qualifications are also internationally recognised by employers and universities in other countries that are signatories to the Washington Accord.

The high standards met by the school is a key reason why it is one of the leading mining engineering programmes internationally, he said. The school also remains the largest mining engineering programme in the English-speaking world; student numbers have been steady at about 850 undergraduates and postgraduates in recent years. In addition to attracting a high quality of local students, about 15% of the student body typically comes from countries outside South Africa.

Self evaluation

“The visit by ECSA accreditation teams follows an extensive process of self-evaluation, during which we document our activities and progress over the previous five years – and submit to them in advance,” he says. “Their visit is then to scrutinise that we actually do what we say we do, to meet the exacting standards demanded by the Washington Accord guidelines.”

The teams interrogate all aspects of the self-evaluation report – interviewing staff and students alike, and inspecting the official documentation and facilities to ensure compliance.

“For instance, our world-class laboratories are inspected and even student reports are checked to ensure that these facilities are being used to the full extent required by the various laboratory exercises that we conduct,” said Musingwini.

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