

Accredited Company Training Schemes (ACTS) Abeyance and Extensions Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes clear guidelines for managing accreditation timelines for ACTS companies. It consolidates accreditation adjustment requests into two categories—abeyance and extension—to streamline processes, reduce confusion, and ensure equitable treatment of ACTS companies.

Abeyance of Accreditation

Abeyance (inactive status) applies when a company temporarily halts training activities and cannot continue accreditation due to inactivity.

Guidelines for Approval

- No active trainee recruitment.
- A significant pause in operations.
- Unforeseen or exceptional circumstances (e.g., global events, disasters)

Terms

- Abeyance status is granted for up to 12 months.
- The company must provide an update on its status before the abeyance period ends.
- If a re-accreditation visit does not occur before the end of the abeyance period, accreditation will be withdrawn.
- Inactivity exceeding 12 months will lead to withdrawal of IChemE accreditation. Companies will be encouraged to reapply for accreditation when circumstances change, and will be treated as a new accreditation.

Extension of Accreditation

Extensions allow a delay in reaccreditation visits while extending the accreditation period by up to **12 months**.

Guidelines for Approval

Extensions may be requested for reasons such as:

- Recent changes in ACTS Manager or leadership.
- Significant company restructuring, mergers, or acquisitions.
- Unforeseen scheduling conflicts or exceptional circumstances (e.g., global events, disasters).

Terms

- Approved extensions will update the accreditation end date proportionally to reflect the new period. For example:
 - Original accreditation end date: 1 January 2025
 - Extension granted: 6 months
 - New accreditation end date: 1 July 2025
- Delays beyond 3 months require a formal request with justification and PDSUB approval.
- If a re-accreditation visit is not completed within the extension period, accreditation will lapse, and the company must reapply.

Compliance and Timelines

- Companies are expected to manage accreditation timelines proactively, and are advised to make an application for abeyance or extension a minimum of 1 month before the accreditation end date, and earlier if possible.
- All requests should be submitted by email to acts@icheme.org, and must include the following information:
 - confirmation of whether the request is for abeyance or extension,
 - the duration of adjustment requested,
 - reason(s) for the adjustment, and
 - any supporting evidence.
- On receipt of a request for abeyance or extension, the company's request will be acknowledged and taken forward to the next available meeting of the PD Subcommittee, usually within 3 months.
- The maximum allowable accreditation period under the Engineering Council's Licence is 5 years, and no extension or abeyance granted by PDSUB can exceed this limit.
- Any delay beyond the approved timeframe + 3 months without an extension request will result in withdrawal of IChemE accreditation.
- The outcome of requests and any associated terms will be formally notified to companies by email within 1 week of the PDSUB meeting.
- Companies may request a review if their application for abeyance or extension is denied, by formally writing to the IChemE Accreditation Administrator.
- Companies are asked to note that any request may impact IChemE's assessment of accreditation risk for the scheme, and the subsequent accreditation visit is likely to be required to take place on-site.

Examples of Application

Scenario 1: Abeyance

A company halts graduate recruitment due to an economic downturn. It requests abeyance, which PDSUB approves for 12 months. The company updates IChemE before the end of the period, but recruitment remains paused. Accreditation is withdrawn, and the company reapplies when ready.

Scenario 2: Extension

A company undergoing a merger needs additional time for reaccreditation preparation. It requests a 6-month extension, which PDSUB grants, updating the accreditation end date.

Scenario 3: Visit delayed beyond end date, no application for extension

A company is due for re-accreditation in July but due to scheduling conflicts a visit is arranged in September. The visit takes place within 3 months of the accreditation end date so no formal extension request is required, and the accreditation period dates remain unchanged.

Summary

This policy ensures fairness and transparency for both ACTS companies and PDSUB. It also ensures compliance with the terms of the Engineering Council's Licence. All companies are encouraged to communicate proactively with IChemE to avoid disruptions in their accreditation status.