INTRODUCTION
In many countries undergraduate engineering programmes can be submitted to a national body for accreditation. Graduates from accredited programmes are eligible, often with an additional requirement for relevant work experience, for registration as a professional engineer. In the UK this accreditation is overseen by the Engineering Council via UK-Spec. and opens the way to C.Eng, I.Eng or Eng Tech qualifications. In the USA ABET serves a similar function, while in Australia the appropriate body is Engineers Australia. In all cases the programme, its students, and sometimes its graduates, are scrutinised by a committee of professional engineers before accreditation is awarded for a fixed period such as five years. The accreditation process involves substantial paperwork and usually a one or two day visitation, so is quite costly both for the educational institution and the professional body. I argue in this article that this considerable effort does not represent good value for money and in some cases may have a negative effect on the quality of engineering education.

THE CASE AGAINST ACCREDITATION
Did the accreditation of professional engineering programmes prevent the disastrous crash of the Airbus 330, flight AF 447, in June 2009? Equally, is it responsible for the fact that the Eiffel tower has remained standing for 120 years?
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