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Abstract

New institutionalism predicts a global convergence in how higher education is organized. This convergence might be expected to intensify in professional education given accreditation requirements of professional bodies. Engineering presents an opportunity to study how international mobility agreements facilitate the development and normative diffusion of global norms in accreditation. This paper investigates how changing logics of accreditation influence the academic organization of engineering schools in Canada. Using three case studies of Canadian universities, we show how regulative and normative institutional pressures influence decisions by engineering schools to take visible action to demonstrate their conformity to global norms, while still pursuing local missions. Our findings contribute to understanding the complex mediation processes between professions and universities, and they represent a critique to dominant rationalist perspectives on quality assurance mechanisms in higher education. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)