



THE INSTITUTE OF FIRE SAFETY MANAGERS

POLICY FOR THE ACCREDITATION OR APPROVAL OF

TRAINING COURSE PROVIDERS



THE INSTITUTE OF FIRE SAFETY MANAGERS

Founded 1994

General Procedures for Accreditation of Courses and Approval of Training Centres and Similar Establishments

1 Introduction

The following sets out the general terms for the accreditation by the Institute of relevant courses and qualifications delivered by training providers and also the general terms for awarding Approved Centre status to training centres and similar establishments. The following definitions apply in this document:

IFSM Accredited Course: Any course that the Institute determines is of a standard and quality that is worthy of association with the Institute.

IFSM Approved Centre: Any training centre or similar establishment that offers courses, which the Institute determine are of a standard and quality that is worthy of association with the Institute.

Validation: The continuous maintenance of IFSM Accredited Courses and IFSM Approved Centres.

2 General procedures

- a) The Institute offers course accreditation or approved centre status on receipt of the appropriate fees and associated costs.
- b) The accredited qualification or approved centre status must be continuously validated by the Institute on an annual basis. A nominal annual registration fee will be charged for this process. This fee is set to cover administration costs and falls due on 31st January each year, for the proceeding year. An invoice will be sent out at the beginning of each year.
- c) Failure to pay the annual registration fee promptly may result in the Institute withdrawing its accreditation or approval.
- d) If the accreditation or approval is withdrawn due to failure to pay the annual registration fees promptly, then a full accreditation or approval fee will become due if validation is to continue. Thereafter, registration fees will become due as outlined in b) above.
- e) The Institute must be informed if there is to be any material change or additions to the accredited qualification(s) or if there are any significant changes in approved centres which may affect its standing. On notification of

such, the Institute will appoint a member of the Institute's Council to determine whether the changes have any effect on the confirmed process regarding the qualification or centre.

- f) The Institute expects the training provider or approved organisation to maintain regular contact with the Institute and should supply proof of the maintenance of standards. The Institute will conduct an audit and review every five years, the costs of this to be borne by the training provider or approved organisation.
- g) The Institute reserves the right to ask for proof of maintenance of standards.

3 Entitlements of Accredited Course providers and Approved Centres

- a) Each organisation that runs accredited courses or holds approved centre status is entitled to use the Institute's name and 'Accredited/Approved Centre by the Institute of Fire Safety Managers for Training' Logo. This may be used on any material that has relevance to the accredited course or, in the case of an approved centre, all relevant courses that are run under the banner of the approved centre. The use of this logo may continue whilst all current fees have been paid. *Further details regarding the use of the IFSM name and Logo may be gained from the Secretary General.*
- b) The Institute will issue a general certificate of approval to an organization holding approved centre status provided all current fees have been paid. All organisations running accredited courses may use the Institute's accredited course logo on the certificates of the successful candidates provided all fees have been paid and on receipt of a nominal roll of said successful candidates. Approved centres may use the same logo on all course certificates that are provided to successful candidates for those courses that have formed the basis of the approved centre status.

Internal Procedures for Accreditation of Courses and Approval of Training Centres and Similar Establishments

1. Introduction and Authority

1.1 Introduction

This part of the document lays down the Institute's policy for the accreditation or approval of training course providers. These procedures are set out for the use of the accreditation teams when carrying out accreditations or approvals for and on behalf of the Institute. They are designed to provide the accreditation teams with the necessary guidance and advice needed to make recommendations on the quality and standard of applications for accreditation or approval. These procedures have been structured for 'internal' use only for those courses requiring accreditation and centres requiring approval.

1.2 Prior Approval

The approval and accreditation process shall normally be started upon receipt of an application by the Accreditation Secretary.

1.3 Authority to Progress Accreditation Negotiations and Contracts

The authority to handle and progress all accreditation and/or approval matters shall be vested with the Secretary General who will assemble, as thought necessary or appropriate, a team from members of Council to assist with the accreditation activities as outlined in this document.

2. Initial Procedure

Upon receipt of an enquiry about accreditation or approval or for an actual request to carry out such accreditation and/or approval, the Accreditation Secretary shall send the enquiring body an application form (attached at Appendix 1) and the current schedule of fees.

3. Receipt of Application

3.1 Upon receipt of a completed application form, the Accreditation Secretary will:

- a) Acknowledge receipt of the application with the applicant.
- b) Check the applications for omissions and/or accuracy and take any remedial action necessary with the applicant.
- c) Take action to start the process.
- d) Present the application for minuting at the next available meeting Council.

- 3.2 Upon receipt of a completed application form, the accreditation team leader shall contact the applicant and confirm the following:
- a) Name of the course(s) or programme(s) being designed, delivered or promoted by the applicant for which accreditation is sought.
 - b) Identity of the individual(s) who have prime responsibility for the course(s) or programme(s) for which accreditation/approval is sought.
 - c) Intended target audience of the course(s) or programme(s).
 - d) Identification of the certification or qualification linked to the course(s) or programme(s).
 - e) Confirm any confidentiality issues.

4. Review and Evaluation of Information

- 4.1 Upon confirmation of the information at 3.2 above, the accreditation team will evaluate the information contained in the application. In particular, it must be established that the applying body meets or exceeds the criteria laid down in the Institute's accreditation policy.
- 4.2 When the accreditation team has decided that the criteria and requirements have been met, the Accreditation Secretary will contact the applicant and arrange a visit to the applicant's site to carry out the accreditation or approval.

5. Site Visit Stage

- 5.1 There shall be at least **one** visit to the applicant's site before granting accreditation or approval of the particular course(s) or programme(s).
- 5.2 Two representatives from the accreditation team shall visit the applicant's site to accredit the course(s) or programme(s) or approve the centre. These representatives shall make their evaluation of the applying body and its educational and training processes, the procedures for ensuring quality assurance, academic standards and resource provision.
- 5.3 The Accreditation/Approval Team should pay particular attention to the following points:
- 5.3.1 The purpose and objectives of the course.
 - 5.3.2 The course management.
 - 5.3.3 Admission requirements and student selection.
 - 5.3.4 Criteria for the progress of students through the course.
 - 5.3.5 Failure rates.
 - 5.3.6 Course structure, philosophy and methodology.
 - 5.3.7 Technical subjects taught.
 - 5.3.8 Teaching methods.
 - 5.3.9 Subject options.

- 5.3.10 Integration of design, management and professional studies.
- 5.3.11 Projects.
- 5.3.12 Methods of assessment.
- 5.3.13 General resources.
- 5.3.14 Staff qualifications and experience.
- 5.3.15 Support staff.
- 5.3.16 External moderation arrangements (including quality control and standards, e.g. BS/ISO).
- 5.3.17 Extent and arrangements for practical work.

5.4 The Accreditation/Approval visit should aim to achieve the following:

- 5.4.1 Meet staff and students and discuss the course with them.
- 5.4.2 Inspect a selection of students' work, examination papers and assessments.
- 5.4.3 To ascertain, by inspection, whether adequate facilities are available for the course.

5.5 The Accreditation/Approval visit should last as long as required to include the following phases:

- 5.5.1 An initial meeting of the Accreditation/Approval Team alone.
- 5.5.2 A meeting with the Head of Department/Course Leader.
- 5.5.3 Discussions with members of the academic staff.
- 5.5.4 Meeting with a representative group of students (if possible).
- 5.5.5 A tour of all facilities.
- 5.5.6 A final meeting of the Accreditation/Approval Team.
- 5.5.7 A final meeting with the Head of Department/Course Leader.

6. Accreditation

Subject to a satisfactory conclusion following the site visit and evaluation of the course(s) or centre the accreditation team will present their recommendations for ratification of accreditation or approval for the period stated in the final documentation (Appendix 2). **Invoicing for accreditation and/or approval fees plus incurred expenses will be actioned by the Honorary Treasurer on notification of the Secretary General.**

7. Appeals Procedure

Subject to the decision not to accredit or approve a course, the applicant will have the right to appeal the decision. This appeal must be in writing and addressed to the Secretary General. It should be sent no later than one calendar month after the accreditation or approval team decision was given to the applicant. On receipt of an appeal, the Secretary General will:

- a) Acknowledge the appeal, in writing, to the applicant.
- b) Appoint an independent panel to review the application and all associated documentation relating to the specific accreditation, approval or validation.
- c) Authorise a second site visit if the panel deem this necessary.

Subsequent to the ratification of the findings of the independent panel by Council, the applicant will be notified of the decision. This decision is final.

8. Monitoring and Control

The Institute shall monitor all matters relating to the way in which the applicant is handling and managing the course(s) or programme(s) for which accreditation has been given and take any action considered necessary through Council. The onus remains with the training provider to inform the Institute of any changes, modifications or amendments made to the accredited or approved centre in order that a review can be carried out, if necessary, and any action required can be taken.

9. Costs, Fees and Final Administration

All costs and fees for the accreditation, approval or validation of courses will be charged at the rate approved by Council of the Institute. The applying body will also be liable for all reasonable and relevant out of pocket expenses incurred by the accreditation team during site visits.

Once Council have approved the decision of the accreditation team for accreditation or approval then the Secretary General will issue the appropriate certificates of the Institute to the training provided (sample certificates are attached at Appendices 4 and 5).

10. Validation and Review

All courses will be continuously validated to maintain their current status with the Institute by the payment of an annual validation fee. All accredited courses and approved centres will be validated annually and fees charged in accordance with the schedule of fees determined from time to time by Council.

The Accreditation Committee will carry out a review of all accredited courses, and approved centres at least every five years.

On receipt of an application for a quinquennial review (application form is attached at Appendix 3) steps 3 to 7 above will be followed. The charges for this review visit will include the accreditation team expenses plus the annual fee if outstanding.

What are the criteria for the progress of students through the course?
(e.g. Continual assessment, term time examinations etc.)

What are the failure rates by examination/assessment?

Briefly describe the course structure, philosophy and methodology:

What technical subjects are taught?

What are the tutorial and teaching methods?

What are the subject options?

Describe the resources available to students. (e.g. Residential accommodation, library, distance learning etc.).

What are the criteria for staff qualifications and experience? Is support staff available?

What are the arrangements for external moderation, including quality control and standards (e.g. ISO and BS)?

What are the arrangements for practical work?

Are any of the students sponsored?

Is there any industrial or employer involvement in the course?

Is there any involvement of staff with industry?

The completed application form should be sent to:

**The Accreditation Secretary
The Institute of Fire Safety Managers
19 Pollard Way
Gomersal
Cleckheaton
West Yorkshire
BD19 4PR**

On receipt of the application an acknowledgement will be sent to the applicant. Please note that Council and the accreditation team will consider the application with all haste. Further details may be requested from the applicant, before a visit is arranged.



Appendix 2

THE INSTITUTE OF FIRE SAFETY MANAGERS
(Founded 1994)

Accreditation Team Report

Centre/Establishment:	Contact:
Address, inc. post code:	Telephone: Fax: E-mail:
Centre Representatives present:	IFSM Accreditation Team Members:
Location:	Date of Visit:
Courses Assessed:	

Background Information:

Original Application Date:

Accreditation or Approval Status:

Student Group:

Centre Facilities/Resources:

Course Structure:

Assessment Method:

Course Literature:

Examination Procedure, Papers and Assessments:

Results, including Failure Rates:

External Moderation Arrangements:

Practical Work Arrangements:

Student Course Work Inspected:

Staff Discussion:

Representatives present:

Student Discussion:

Representatives present:

Recommendations:

Accreditation Team Comments and Recommendations:

Report prepared by:

Date:



Appendix 3

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**PROFORMA FOR THE QUINQUENNIAL REVIEW OF
ACCREDITED COURSES AND APPROVED CENTRE STATUS**

Centre/Establishment: _____	
Contact: _____	
Address: _____	

_____ Post Code: _____	
Telephone: _____	Fax: _____
E-mail Address: _____	
Centre to be approved:	Course(s) to be validated/accredited:
_____	_____
_____	_____

Answers to the following questions will enable the Institute to appoint an appropriate accreditation team. Once the application has been accepted it may be necessary to request submission of further documentation that will form the basis of the accreditation. Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Indicate course duration, programme and objectives:

<p>What are the criteria for the progress of students through the course? (e.g. Continual assessment, term time examinations etc.)</p>
<p>What are the failure rates by examination/assessment? (NB. Pass/fail lists to support, will assist)</p>
<p>Briefly describe the course structure, philosophy and methodology:</p>
<p>What technical subjects are taught? (Enclose a copy of the syllabus, if appropriate)</p>
<p>What are the tutorial and teaching methods utilised?</p>
<p>Indicate for which Authorities you train personnel:</p>
<p>Describe the resources available to students. (e.g. Residential accommodation, library, distance learning etc.).</p>

<p>What are the criteria for training and tutorial staff selection? (Qualifications, training and experience) Is support staff available?</p>
<p>What are the arrangements for external moderation, including quality control and standards (e.g. NVQ's, ISO and BS)?</p>
<p>What are the arrangements for practical training?</p>
<p>Is there any sponsorship agreements prevailing in respect of the course?</p>
<p>Is there any industrial or employer involvement in the course?</p>
<p>Is there any involvement of staff with industry?</p>

The completed application form should be sent to:

**The Accreditation Secretary
The Institute of Fire Safety Managers
19 Pollard Way
Gomersal
Cleckheaton
West Yorkshire
BD19 4PR**

On receipt of the application an acknowledgement will be sent to the contact. Please note that the accreditation team will consider the information and schedule a mutually convenient date for the team to visit. It is helpful for the team to speak to staff and students at the time of the inspection. In exceptional circumstances this can be achieved by other methods upon request. This may require an additional visit by a team member.