

Institution of Fire Engineers



Canada Branch

**Procedures for Accreditation
or Approval**

March 2004

Preamble. This document lays down the Institution of Fire Engineers Canada Branch Policy for the accreditation or approval of courses and training 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 Branch. 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. The procedures have been structured for 'internal' use and only for those courses requiring accreditation for equivalency with IFE Examinations and/or approval by the Branch.

Definitions: IFE Accredited Course: Any course which is equivalent to the Institution's Examinations, in whole or part.

IFE Approved Course: Any course which is not equivalent to the Institution's Examinations, in whole or part, but which is of a standard and quality that is worthy of association with the Institution.

IFE Approved Centre: Any Training Establishment or Centre that offers courses, which may or may not be equivalent to the Institution's Examinations, but are of a standard and quality that is worthy of association with the Institution.

1. Authority

1.1 Prior Approval

The IFE Canada Branch Committee for the Accreditation & Approval of courses and Training Centres (hereafter referred to as the Accreditation Committee) shall give it's approval for the start of negotiations regarding the accreditation or approval by the IFE of courses or training providers', in association with these procedures.

1.2 Authority to Progress Accreditation Negotiations and Contracts

The authority to handle and progress all IFE accreditation and/or approval matters shall be vested with the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee. He may assemble, as thought necessary or appropriate, a team, from the Accreditation Committee, to assist with the accreditation or approval activities as outlined in this procedure.

2. Initial Procedure

Upon receipt of an enquiry about accreditation or approval, the IFE National Secretary shall send the enquiring body an Application Form (attached at Annex A) and the current schedule of fees.

3. Receipt of Application

3.1 Upon receipt of a completed Application Form, the IFE National 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) Inform the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee.
- d) Present the application for minuting at the next available meeting of the Accreditation Committee.

- 3.2 Upon receipt of a completed Application Form, The Chairman of the Accreditation Committee 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) at the applying body who have prime responsibility for the course(s) or programme(s) for which accreditation 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) period of time for which accreditation will be given.
 - f) level of fees involved for both the accreditation of course(s) or programme(s) and the certification of individual students.
 - g) confidentiality issues.

4. Review and Evaluation of Information

- 4.1 Upon confirmation of the information requested in 3.2, the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee will, either individually or in conjunction with others, evaluate the information contained in this document. In particular, it must be determined that the applying body meets or exceeds the criteria laid down in the IFE's Accreditation Policy.
- 4.2 If any shortcomings emerge from this evaluation, or if the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee decides that the applicant will have to meet additional requirements before accreditation can proceed, this information will be given in writing to the applicant.
- 4.3 When the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee has decided that the criteria and requirements identified in 4.1 and 4.2 have been met, the IFE 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 accreditation or approval of the particular course(s) or centre is given.
- 5.2 At least two representatives from the IFE shall visit the applicant's site to accredit or approve the course(s) or centre specified on the Application Form. 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 using the document entitled: "Accreditation Site Visits - Guidance Document for IFE Accreditation and/or Approval Team Members" (attached at Annex B).
- 5.3 No verbal or written confirmation of accreditation or approval will be given to the applicant(s) prior to formal ratification by the Accreditation Committee.

6. Accreditation or Approval

Subject to a satisfactory conclusion following the site visit and an evaluation of the findings (reference Section 5 above), the course(s) developed, delivered or promoted by the applicant, shall be presented to the Canada Branch Council for ratification of accreditation or approval for the period recommended in the report. The National Secretary will send notification of the approval or accreditation to the IFE headquarters. **Invoicing for accreditation and/or approval fees plus incurred expenses will then be actioned by the IFE National Secretary.**

7. Appeals Procedure

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

- a) Acknowledge the appeal, in writing, to the applicant.
- b) Appoint a panel, independent to the original team, to review the application and all associated documentation relating to the specific accreditation or approval.
- c) Authorize a second site visit if the Panel deem this necessary
- d) Inform the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee
- e) Take the recommendations of the independent panel to the Accreditation Committee for ratification.

Subsequent to the ratification of the findings of the independent panel by both the Accreditation Committee, the applicant will be notified of the decision.

8. Monitoring and Control

The IFE Canada Branch shall monitor all matters relating to the way in which the applicant is handling and managing the course(s) for which accreditation or approval has been given. Corrective or restraining notices in writing will be issued to the applicant if and when necessary. The concerns so identified shall be addressed by the applicant or the accreditation or approval of the relevant course(s) will be withdrawn without refund. The onus remains with the training provider to inform the IFE Canada Branch of any changes, modifications or amendments made to the accredited or approved course in order that a review can be carried out, if necessary, and any action required can be taken.

9. Key Roles of IFE Staff and Committees

9.1 The Accreditation Committee:

The Accreditation Committee must agree in principle all accreditation or approval agreements before contract negotiations are started.

9.2 The Responsible Person:

The accreditation or approval of courses designed, delivered or promoted by other organizations or bodies is the responsibility of that person holding the delegated authority (reference Section 1, paragraph 1.2 above). The main areas of responsibility are:

- a) Liaising with the Chairman of the Accreditation Committee on all parts below
- b) Obtaining initial approval from the Accreditation Committee.
- c) Working with individual members of the Secretariat, or with an accreditation or approval team, to ensure the progression of all necessary work.
- d) Promoting and progressing the evaluation of the Self-Study provided by the applicant seeking accreditation or approval for a course.
- e) Making decisions with respect to any additional conditions that the IFE Canada Branch requires from the applicant before accreditation or approval can be progressed.
- f) Choosing the Site Team to visit the applicant and empowering this team to make recommendations regarding final accreditation or approval.
 - g) Placing the Accreditation Report and associated recommendations before the Accreditation Committee.
 - h) Communicate final accreditation decisions to applicant.

9.3 The IFE National Secretary

The IFE National Secretary will co-ordinate the accreditation or approval process in general. The use of the expertise and experience of appropriate IFE staff at the secretariat will be essential at various stages the accreditation or approval process. The Secretariat staff will be involved in some or all of these functions:

- a) Responding to the applicant on receipt of a notice of initial interest.
- b) Liaising with the applicant through the named contact person.
- c) Keeping the responsible person informed of progress.
- f) Progressing necessary action as directed by the responsible person.
- g) Providing administrative support with respect to Site Visits.
- h) Invoicing the applicant for fees and incurred expenses, where applicable, and the issuing of certification on receipt of payment. (Sample certificates are attached at Annexes C, D. and E.)
- i) Sending, on notification of IFE Accreditation or Approval, "General Procedures for Accreditation and Approval of Education and Training Centres/Establishments" (Annex F) or "General Procedures for Accreditation and Review (Equivalency)" (Annex G) as applicable, to the successful applicants.
- j) Evaluating Self-Study Reports from client entities, with particular emphasis on the relevance and pertinence of fire-related curriculum content.
- k) Making Site Visits, and participating in the evaluation of the information gathered from these.

10. Costs and Fees

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

11. Continuous Review

All courses will be continuously monitored to maintain their current status with the Institution by the payment of an annual administration fee. All IFE Accredited Courses, Approved Courses and Approved Centres will be reviewed annually and fees charged as stated in 10.

The Accreditation Committee will carry out an on-site review of all IFE Accredited Courses, Approved Courses and Approved Centres at least every five years.

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