INFORMATION ON COURSE ACCREDITATION

Assuring professionalism and industry relevance in moving image education and training.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency recognises & approves the Society as an accrediting body. BKSTS Accreditation is included in the Key Information Set (KIS) for UK Higher Education courses.

An affordable and user friendly complementary scheme that is available alongside any others on offer.

bkstsaccreditation: a service to Education & Training provided by International Moving Image Society.

Course Accreditation

Recognition of Courses by IMIS
- through it's service to Education & Training: bkstsaccreditation

Introduction

Since 1984, the predecessor of IMIS, the BKSTS, provided formal recognition of relevant educational courses, as a way of building stronger links between the media industries and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Accredited courses are seen by many organisations in the media industries as being relevant and as a source of potential employees. HEIs are helped by the closer links they have been able to establish with the Industry. Students are helped by the provision of realistic training and education, and involvement with companies in their chosen area of work. Media organisations are helped by having a clearer idea of the content and scope of the courses being offered and by having an opportunity to contribute to the course design, content and delivery.

Pre-Requisites for Accreditation

Courses applying for BKSTS Accreditation must already have been validated by an appropriate validating body, such as a degree-awarding institution, BTEC, or have been recognised by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications.

For full accreditation, the course must have had at least one cohort graduate.

For a course to be accredited, the content, standard, philosophy and approach of the course must be compatible with and be seen as being relevant to the needs of the media industries and the aims of the IMIS / BKSTS.

It is important to media organisations that they know the type of education and training that potential employees will have received, and can rely on its standard. IMIS, as one of the leading media industry bodies, and being dedicated to the development of technical professionalism and excellence, is well placed to assess the realism of the course, and to recommend ways in which it can be strengthened.

Accreditation Criteria

A full listing of the BKSTS Course Accreditation Criteria is enclosed with this information pack.

The Course Design criteria can be assessed through the course documentation. Courses that successfully meet these criteria are granted Approved Course Design status.

The Course Delivery criteria are assessed during a visit by an Accreditation Panel that is appointed by the IMIS ETC (Education & Training Committee). It usually comprises 2 or 3 members of the ETC or industry specialists seconded from the IMIS membership.

Course Accreditation Timetable

There will be occasions and opportunities for the below indicative timetable to be expedited.

Month 1
Applicant courses must complete an application form and supply all the requested documentation.
Please note:
The accreditation process will not continue without the correct documentation.
IMIS will NOT undertake photocopying where an inadequate quantity of documentation is supplied.

Month 1 - 2
The application is discussed at the next IMIS ETC meeting, where an initial assessment is made on whether to proceed and, if so, an Accreditation Panel is formed. The Accreditation Panel members read the documentation supplied during the period before the following ETC Meeting. Approved Course Design status may be awarded at this point.

Month 2 - 3
If the Accreditation Panel needs more information in order to proceed to the visit stage, the Course Leader may be invited to a panel meeting to discuss the course, any major issues, problem areas or shortcomings, etc, prior to actual visit. This discussion may take place as an audio conference by telephone or across the Internet. The course is then discussed at the next ETC meeting (normally later the same day), where the decision to proceed to the visit stage is taken.
In the case of a new course, this stage may be delayed until year 2 of the course is underway.

Month 4
The Accreditation Panel visit the course and follow the attached Accreditation Visit Agenda. If requested, the host institution arranges overnight accommodation. This would normally apply to locations beyond a 100 mile radius of London.

Month 5
IMIS ETC discuss the recommendations of the Accreditation Panel and approve the Accreditation Report that is to be sent to the host institution. The Accreditation Report will be accompanied by a covering letter and a Certificate of Course Accreditation that will state the start date of the course accreditation. IMIS will always recommend on-going consultation with the institution. If a course is not granted accredited status, there is the opportunity to re-apply within 18 months, without incurring an extra fee, if changes recommended in the Accreditation Report are implemented within that time. However, expenses for travel/accommodation of panel member(s) on any resultant visit will be met by the institution.

Expenses
Regardless of the outcome, all reasonable expenses for accommodation, subsistence and travel for the accreditation visit are to be met by the institution that is seeking BKSTS Accreditation for its course(s).

Accreditation Fee
The fees for accreditation and subsequent renewal are contained in a separate document available on request.

Additional Information

BKSTS Accreditation only extends to the particular course reviewed. It does not apply to the institution as a whole. An institution may wish to seek accreditation for more than one course.

BKSTS Accreditation for a course is granted for a period of five years subject to a satisfactory annual renewal form declaration.

Application for BKSTS Accreditation must be made on the accompanying form and the appropriate remittance should be enclosed. It is important that the information about the course syllabus is included with the application. An application will not be processed without this information. IMIS reserves the right to withdraw accreditation at any time and for any reason it deems appropriate.

Agenda for the Accreditation Panel Visit for the Accreditation of Courses

10.30 – 11.30 Tour of Technical / Production Facilities

nature, amount, relevance of equipment and facilities
attention given to sound
film v digital
digital, multi-media technology and process
technical support and maintenance
the production process – student production planning
workflow, booking systems, availability and access
costing / budgets / deadlines

11.45 – 12.30 Visit to Student Base Rooms / Theory / Lecture Rooms

course ethos and approach
course timetables / practical : theory
I.T. Facilities
Library Resource Centre
nature and amount of "contact" hours

**12.45 – 13.30 Sandwich Lunch with Some Students
(5 – 8 approx. predominance of year 2 and 3)**

students perceptions of nature of course before and now
perceptions of the nature of the industry
student course experience
extra-curricular?
students experience of industry as a result of course
students thoughts and approach to future employment

13.30 – 14.00 Viewing Student Work

14.00 – 14.30 Discussion with Course Leader (& Colleague)

indicative impressions so far
points of clarification

14.45 – 16.00 Perusal of Documentary Evidence / Viewing Student Work

16.15 Meeting with Course Leader

indicative impressions so far
points of clarification
the next (closing) stages

NB. These are estimated times and the visit day agenda is negotiated with the team being visited.

The Society reserves the right to change any details they wish to at any time.

Course Accreditation Scheme Benefits Summary

BKSTS Accreditation provides a formal recognition of media-related full-time, part-time and short courses. The key aim of the scheme is to recognise that an Accredited course provides a student experience that is as relevant as possible to working in the media industries and reflects real-world practice. An Accredited Course must give potential media industry employers confidence that students successfully completing the course are suitably equipped to work in their chosen area of the media industries. Successful accredited courses are buying into a network of relevant industry professionals and their organisations.

IMIS, through its links with the industry, can facilitate collaborative activities and events that enhance the scope of student work experience opportunities. Society sponsor companies therefore also benefit from the improved links with educational establishments that can arise from the scheme.

IMIS grants accreditation to full-time, part-time and short courses that can demonstrate their relevance to the needs of companies and organisations within the media industries. Successful accreditation provides the recipient institution with a range of benefits that extends to course students. The substantive benefits for Accredited Courses are described below.

Course Accreditation Benefits for Institutions & Students

1. **IMIS** will, on request, provide some assistance with the setting up of an Industry Advisory Panel and / or establish links with industry. This could include the following:

   a. **IMIS** offers any institution with one or more Accredited Courses the opportunity of hosting a social and/or technical **IMIS** event and/or Education & Training Group meeting.

   b. **IMIS** offers informed on-line career advice to students on an Accredited Course.

   c. **IMIS** will showcase the Accredited Course on display stands at exhibitions and conferences attended by the **IMIS**, for example in the form of posters or a showreel DVD that the Course Team provides.

2. **IMIS** will facilitate an annual showcase event for Accredited Courses at a suitable venue such as the BFI Southbank or alternative London venue.

3. In the four intervening years between accreditation and re-accreditation a member of the Education and Training Committee will be available to visit the accredited course once each year to take part in one of a number of activities during their visit that could include:- a meeting of the course's industry advisory board / a presentation to students / industry careers advice / review of students work / staff meeting / or other course activities or initiatives by prior arrangement. Whilst there is no charge for the committee member's time, any travel and / or overnight expenses will be borne by the institution.

4. The Education and Training Committee plan to develop further initiatives towards achieving other opportunities for staff and students on accredited courses during their accreditation period, either geographically nearby, or linked by common disciplines, to get together to further enhance the general aims of the accreditation scheme – this could be by developing such initiatives as a contact / social networking for students and staff on accredited courses, conferences, visits, competitions, setting of briefs, staff discussions on common

concerns etc. There would be some expectation on the courses involved in these to assist with their organisation and bear the costs of their students taking part.

5. The institution receives a certificate suitable for display at their reception showing the course name and date of accreditation. It also receives a certificate describing the **IMIS** and listing the names of all **IMIS** sponsor organisations.

6. The institution may use the **IMIS** logos on letter-headed paper, accredited course documentation, website and other marketing material during the period of Accreditation, noting that it is the course that is accredited and not the Institution.

7. The institution is offered one free individual **IMIS** membership for the duration of the accreditation. This would normally be the Course Leader or Link Tutor of the Accredited Course.

8. The course leader / team member who is given membership of IMIS will have access to the society's online EBSCO database of published articles taken from its learned journals covering all aspects of the media, sound and moving image industries. Both current up to date articles are in the database as well historical information about these industries. This is a very useful resource both for staff and students in undertaking coursework, and dissertation research. Valuable access to the Society's library of historic information at Pinewood Studios may also be available by prior appointment.

9. A listing of the Accredited Courses and their institutions is included in **IMIS** publications, including the **IMIS** website.

10. The institution is offered a link between the Accredited Course and the relevant section of the **IMIS** website.

11. The institution receives email notification of all **IMIS** events for publicising to staff and students on notice boards.

12. The details of Accredited Courses and their institutions are promoted to anyone seeking careers information from **IMIS.**

13. Students on an Accredited Course gain **IMIS** membership at the student discount rate for their first renewal following completion of the course.

Course Accreditation Criteria

Course Design

1. The course must already have received validation from an appropriate academic body.

2. The requested documentation shall have been submitted for inspection.

3. The course shall be demonstrably directed towards the learning of skills applicable to a profession/job role within the media industries.

4. The course shall have an appreciable percentage of hands-on practical content.

5. The student numbers on the course shall be appropriate for the available resources.

6. The course shall have realistic entry requirements.

7. The course shall meet the aims of BKSTS in maintaining standards and encouraging the pursuit of excellence in all relevant aspects of moving image and associated sound technology.

8. The course shall include training in business practice and the management of people to prepare students for possible self-employment.

9. The course shall include an opportunity for the students to control their own resources in producing a moving image project.

10. The Course Leader or other nominated course tutor shall agree to be or already be a Member of BKSTS during the period the course is accredited. It should also be noted if the College Principal or any of the associated tutors are BKSTS members.

11. An Accredited Course shall be assessed as being capable of delivering graduated students who will be immediately employable within the industry.

12. The course shall have properly conducted and appropriate assessments.

Course Delivery

13. The material and human resources readily available must be adequate to meet the aims, standards and demands of the course.

14. The teaching staff must be suitably qualified both to meet the academic needs of the course and in terms of recent/current experience within the industry.

15. The technical support staff shall be suitably qualified and trained to maintain the equipment.

16. The facilities and working methods made available to students must reflect current practice in the industry.

17. The assessment team must gain a clear impression of enthusiasm for the media industry both from students and tutors.

18. The course must provide contacts with the industry, through student placements in suitable companies/organisations, exposure to current working practices and realistic project work.

19. The course programme shall contain industry visits or presentations by external speakers that are built into the course programme.

20. Students shall have acquired a clear idea of where in the industry they would like to start employment and this will be at a modest and realistically achievable level. It would be an advantage if students have an understanding of a career path for themselves.

21. The course members shall have ready access to appropriate learning resources and information technology facilities.

22. Past evidence of assessments shall be available for inspection prior to Accreditation where appropriate.