

A brief summary of the accreditation process by the Institute of Marine Engineering,
Science and Technology (IMarEST)

Introduction

The IMarEST is an engineering and scientific institution licensed by the Engineering Council and the Science Council. It also holds a Royal Charter in its own right to grant (amongst other titles) Chartered Scientist, Chartered Marine Scientist, Chartered Engineer or Chartered Marine Engineer to those members who are suitably qualified. One of the many functions performed by the Institute, as a direct result of the Royal Charter and its licences, is the accreditation of academic courses in marine science and marine engineering. Incidentally, the IMarEST is the largest such marine orientated organisation, that provides this service, in the world.

The process of accreditation

The process of accreditation by IMarEST is basically an independent, peer review of an academic course to internationally recognised standards by a suitable panel of experts. The review process is unique (it is not an audit) in that courses are scrutinised and advice is offered to universities and colleges from a panel of experts drawn from the broader membership of the IMarEST. The process involves a review of a completed application form and supporting documentation by the panel; a visit to the university or college; interviews with students on the course and recent graduates; presentations from key members of staff; a tour of the facilities and positive feedback at the end of the visit from the panel Chair to the key staff of the university or college.

This peer review process is designed to be helpful to the university/college. The university staff receives a free *consultancy service* to highlight any problems with the course and suggestions for improvements. This Quality Assurance of the course is to recognised national and international standards. The students on an IMarEST accredited course have a guarantee of the highest academic standards of the course and of satisfying many of the requirements for registration at Chartered level or Incorporated/Registered level.

The university/college/organisation is able to use IMarEST accreditation for promotional purposes to encourage potential students to apply for a place on the course. Similarly the IMarEST does not charge the university/college for this service. The university/college/organisation being visited is, however, expected to pay the

"out-of-pocket" expenses incurred by the panel members themselves e.g. travel fares, accommodation expenses and subsistence costs.

Conclusion

Accreditation by IMarEST is an opportunity for universities and colleges to gain advice to improve/maintain the standard of its courses. The process to achieve membership and registration through the Institute is simplified for students who attended IMarEST accredited courses.

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