



BRITISH AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER ASSOCIATION (BAFSA)

POLICY FOR THE ACCREDITATION OF TRAINING COURSES

The following sets out the general terms for the accreditation by BAFSA of relevant courses and qualifications delivered by training the following definitions apply in this document:

BAFSA Accredited Course: Any course that BAFSA determines is of a standard and quality that is worthy of association.

General

BAFSA offers course accreditation on receipt of the appropriate fees and associated costs.

- a) b) The accredited course or qualification must be continuously validated by the BAFSA 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 each year, for the preceding year. An invoice will be issued.
- b) Failure to pay the annual registration fee promptly may result in BAFSA withdrawing its accreditation. If the accreditation is withdrawn due to failure to pay the annual registration fees promptly, then a full accreditation or approval fee will become due if validation is to continue.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.
- c) BAFSA must be informed if there is to be any material change or additions to the accredited course(s) which may affect its standing. On notification of such, BAFSA will determine whether the changes have any effect on the confirmed process.
- d) BAFSA expects the training provider to maintain regular contact with the BAFSA.

Entitlements of Accredited Course providers

Each organisation that runs accredited courses is entitled to use BAFSA's name and 'Accredited by BAFSA for Training' logo. This may be used on any material that has relevance to the accredited. The use of this logo may continue whilst all current fees have been paid. Further details regarding the use of the BAFSA name and logo may be gained from the Chief Executive.

BAFSA will issue a general certificate of course approval to an organisation provided all current fees have been paid.

All organisations running accredited courses may use BAFSA'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.

Internal Procedures for Accreditation of Courses

1. Introduction and Authority

This part of the document lays down BAFSA's policy for the accreditation of training courses. These procedures are set out for the use of the BAFSA Accreditation Team when carrying out accreditations for and on behalf of BAFSA. They are designed to provide the accreditation team 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.

Prior Approval

The approval and accreditation process shall normally be started upon receipt of an application by BAFSA Skills and Qualification Adviser.

Authority to Progress Accreditation Negotiations and Contracts

The authority to handle and progress all accreditation matters shall be vested with the Chief Executive who will assemble the BAFSA Accreditation Team as appropriate, to assist with the accreditation activities as outlined in this document.

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 Skills & Qualifications Adviser shall send the enquiring body an application form (attached at Appendix 1) and the current schedule of fees.

2. Receipt of Application

Upon receipt of a completed application form, the Skills and Qualifications Adviser 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) Action the process.
- d) Present the application to BAFSA Chief Executive and / or the next available BAFSA Council whichever provides the earliest opportunity

Upon receipt of a completed application form, the Skills & Qualification Adviser 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.

3. Review and Evaluation of Information

Upon confirmation of the information at 2, above, the accreditation team will evaluate the information contained in the application. It must be established that the applying body meets or exceeds the criteria laid down in BAFSA accreditation policy.

When the accreditation team has decided that the criteria and requirements have been met, BAFSA Technical Adviser will contact the applicant to invite the applicant to attend BAFSA Technical Meeting to present

4. Site Visit Stage

There shall be at least one visit to the applicant's site before granting accreditation of the course(s) or programme(s). A representative from the accreditation team shall visit the applicant's site to accredit the course(s) or programme(s). 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.

The Accreditation/Approval Team will take into consideration, as appropriate, the following points:

- The purpose and objectives of the course.
- The course management.
- Admission requirements and student selection.
- Criteria for the progress of students through the course.
- Failure rates.
- Course structure, philosophy and methodology.
- Technical subjects taught.
- Teaching methods.
- Subject options.
- Integration of design, management and professional studies.
- Methods of assessment.
- General resources.
- Staff qualifications and experience.
- Support staff.
- External moderation arrangements (including quality control and standards, e.g. BS/ISO).
- Extent and arrangements for practical work.

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

- Meet staff and students and discuss the course with them.
- Inspect a selection of students' work, examination papers and assessments.
- To ascertain, by inspection, whether adequate facilities are available for the course.
- The Accreditation/Approval visit should last as long as required to include the following phases:
 - An initial meeting of the Accreditation/Approval Team alone.
 - A meeting with the Head of Department/Course Leader.
 - Discussions with members of the academic staff.
 - Meeting with a representative group of students (if possible).
 - A tour of all facilities.

- A final meeting of the Accreditation/Approval Team.
- A final meeting with the Head of Department/Course Leader.

Accreditation

Subject to a satisfactory conclusion following the site visit and evaluation of the course(s) 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 Chief Executive.

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 Chief Executive. It should be sent no later than one calendar month after the accreditation team decision was given to the applicant. On receipt of an appeal, the Chief Executive 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.

Monitoring and Control

BAFSA 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. The onus remains with the training provider to inform the Institute of any changes, modifications or amendments made to the accredited course in order that a review can be carried out, if necessary, and any action required can be taken.

Costs, Fees and Final Administration

All costs and fees for the accreditation of courses will be charged at the rate approved by BAFSA 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.

Once Council have approved the decision of the accreditation team for accreditation then the Chief Executive will issue the appropriate certificates of the BAFSA to the training provided (sample certificates are attached)

Validation and Review

All courses will be continuously validated to maintain their current status with BAFSA by the payment of an annual validation fee. All accredited courses 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, 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.

