



INSTITUTE  
OF THE MOTOR  
INDUSTRY

## WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER QUALITY

*Guidance on how to achieve  
IMI approved centre status*



**BECOME AN  
IMI APPROVED  
CENTRE**

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*IMI is committed to transforming the motor industry by raising the importance of vocational learning and professional achievement. We deliver this through close working relationships with our network of IMI approved centres.*

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## INTRODUCTION

As the professional organisation for individuals working in the motor industry, the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) is the authoritative source of sector information and standards. We play a vital role in developing and maintaining a skilled, competent and professional workforce, while keeping pace with evolving automotive technologies.

### WHY IMI?

IMI are the leading awarding organisation for automotive learning and development. As an IMI approved centre, you will have access to advanced knowledge and support from our team of industry specialists, as well as our extensive range of products (Qualifications, Accreditations and Quality Assured Programmes).

We offer over 250 automotive qualifications from light vehicle and air conditioning, to business administration and customer service. As the leading automotive provider, our courses are widely recognised in the industry.

IMI Accreditation is a non-academic way to demonstrate individual capability, providing independent proof of current competence, knowledge and skills. We offer 18 accreditation routes covering technical, customer-facing and managerial job roles.

IMI Quality Assured Programmes provide independent recognition for your customised training programmes. They offer credibility and present a cost-effective solution for your in-house training.

Full details of the Qualifications and Accreditations offered by the IMI can be found at [www.theimi.org.uk](http://www.theimi.org.uk).

## WHO WE WORK WITH

As the global market leader for the automotive sector, we work together with more than 600 approved centres to recognise and support the skills of over 100,000 young and adult learners each year.

The IMI centre network spans the UK and overseas with schools, academies, colleges, employers, vehicle manufacturers and training providers all using IMI's learning and development offer.

We are working with an increasing number of centres and partners across Europe, Malaysia and the Middle East.

To continually evolve with the marketplace, we have worked with industry specialists to develop and expand our qualifications to include options in land-based, caravan & motorhome, cycle and construction plant.

In addition, we operate in partnership with organisations such as Skillsfirst to offer a range of Functional Skills qualifications, which form part of the apprenticeship framework. We also work with the Society of Operations Engineers (SOE) to recognise individuals in the commercial vehicle, trailer and passenger carrying industries as part of irtec accreditation.



*“My recent experience has been preparing an automotive distributor to become the first IMI approved centre in Saudi Arabia. This was only possible with the continuous support from the IMI team. We have been provided with guidance from the inception of the programme, through the preparation for centre approval, and has guided us throughout the last 2 years, despite the distance involved.”*

David O'Neill  
Mohamed Yousef Naghi Motors  
(Saudi Arabia)

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

All centres receive first-class service and support from our team of industry specialists.

### EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE TEAM

We have a dedicated team that offer specialist industry advice and guidance to centres, both in the UK and overseas, relating to qualification delivery and quality assurance. External Quality Assurers (EQAs) ensure that all awarding organisation and regulatory requirements are adhered to, in order to remain compliant.

### SUPPORT SERVICES

The IMI qualification services department supports all enquiries relating to any Qualification, Accreditation or Quality Assured Programme.

We have an unrivalled turnaround time for processing candidate registrations and issuing certificates, a standard we uphold by adhering to our 10-day customer service charter.

Our teams are also on hand to provide IT support relating to IMI systems and websites.

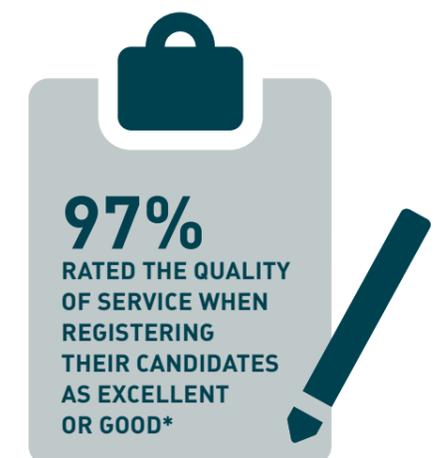
### BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Our business development team provides ongoing support to all centres seeking advice, guidance and support relating to IMI products and services.



*“IMI is at the forefront of automotive qualifications and technologies. The team provides advice and resolves any problems relating to qualifications. Certifications are completed trouble free and again any problems are dealt with promptly.”*

Iain Wallace – GTG Training Glasgow



\*The infographics shown represent results from the 2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey.

# RESOURCES

As an IMI approved centre, you will receive access to a range of resources, specifically tailored to meet your organisation's needs.

## IMI CENTRES HUB

IMI Centres Hub is an online system used to manage quality assurance activities. It reduces paperwork and administration time for both us and our centres, which leads to quicker processes and a smarter, effective means of interacting with our network. In turn, IMI Centres Hub facilitates and strengthens the support we provide by ensuring that we can:

- allow centres to control their own records
- promptly handle centre approval recognition and applications for Qualifications, Accreditations and Quality Assured Programmes
- process enquiries within our customer service charter
- handle requests for reasonable adjustments and special considerations more efficiently
- manage risk and centre action plans
- provide an audit trail of all activities
- improve communications

There are tutorial videos and a detailed user guide available to help you understand and navigate your way around the system. Our teams are also on hand to answer any queries you may have.

## ePORTFOLIO

ePortfolio is a free online platform that provides a centralised location for uploading work, sharing useful documents and communication between assessors and their candidates. It acts as a valuable organisational tool as users can see both outstanding and completed work. Students are able to track their development using the on-screen progression bar.

ePortfolio is available for use at IMI approved centres and is accessible online from any computer. Each centre has their own login details; candidates and assessors can access their individual areas on the platform to keep up to date with their workload.

There are a number of benefits to both centres and candidates for using ePortfolio, including:

- assessor has access to candidates' progress and submitted work
- central location to upload evidence for candidates and store work
- organisational tool for managing workload
- an online platform that reduces paperwork and saves cost
- progress bar to manage workload and aid motivation
- communication tool to contact assessor

## ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

IMI approved centres have access to online assessments\*. The system provides independent testing of IMI Qualifications and Accreditations via a secure, user-friendly platform for candidates. The assessment area is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by approved centre personnel only. Results of the assessments are produced instantly and are submitted to IMI for recording.

A record of achievement and learning outcomes report is available for each candidate to assist their development.

\*when delivering qualifications / accreditations where online assessments are available.

*“IMI has been professional and supportive. Communication and centre updates provide us with an overview of training, resources and changes in the educational landscape. The support and subject-specific expertise offered has been of huge benefit.”*

Stuart Thomas, Centre Co-ordinator  
Telford College of Arts & Technology



## WEBSITE

The IMI website contains essential and up-to-date information to offer support to our centre network.

- Use of online assessments
- IMI Centres Hub access
- Up-to-date support materials, including assessments and criteria
- Candidate and centre guidance
- Centre finder by qualification and location
- Current fees and charges

## MARKETING AND PR SUPPORT

IMI has an extensive range of marketing materials covering Qualifications, Accreditations and Quality Assured Programmes. All IMI approved centres have access to free marketing literature, upon request. You are also eligible to receive promotional items for up to 2 centre open days per academic year. IMI logos can be used on your promotional materials and website, upon request and subject to our guidelines. You will receive regular industry updates via our approved centre e-newsletters with up-to-date information on all IMI awarding organisation activities.

## CAREERS AND DEVELOPMENT

As an IMI approved centre, you will have access to our broad range of careers advice via IMI Autocity to help guide your candidates into the world of work. Visit [www.theimi.org.uk/autocity](http://www.theimi.org.uk/autocity)

for more information. Our World of Work online activity helps individuals decide which automotive areas are of interest to them. All current automotive apprenticeship vacancies, with many of the leading brands, are advertised via the IMI Jobs website, [www.theimi.org.uk/jobs](http://www.theimi.org.uk/jobs).

IMI approved centres have access to any of the CPD courses offered by the IMI. To see the full list of courses available to aid your development and to find out more information, visit [www.theimi.org.uk/professional-development](http://www.theimi.org.uk/professional-development).

## APPRENTICE ROI CALCULATOR

Our return on investment calculator is a free tool to provide an illustration of the financial benefits to an employer of taking on an apprentice. We developed this great online tool as a result of in-depth research part funded by UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES).

By entering a few facts and figures relevant to your business, you can quickly see what a great investment apprentices can be. Find out more, [www.theimi.org.uk/calculator](http://www.theimi.org.uk/calculator).

## IMI eLEARNING

IMI eLearning is a bespoke learning platform that supports light vehicle and accident repair training. The platform uses a blend of multimedia to bring learning to life through interactive activities, 3D imagery, in-depth explanations and links to relevant articles for further study. IMI eLearning encourages users to undertake studies through a range of learning materials.

IMI eLearning does not have to be used in conjunction with any IMI Qualification.

# CENTRE SUPPORT

## CENTRE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOPS

All new and prospective centres have the opportunity to attend a free centre management workshop. These workshops are designed to prepare you for your approval visit and will cover all aspects of our awarding organisation quality assurance requirements, such as:

- navigating the IMI website (including accessing support materials)
- internal quality assurance
- implementing key policies and procedures

The workshops are not limited to new centres. They are also available to our existing centre network, at an additional cost.

## ePORTFOLIO – TRAIN THE TRAINER

To help you get the most out of ePortfolio, we deliver Train the Trainer sessions. The sessions provide guidance to centre personnel on how to use ePortfolio and achieve maximum benefit for candidates, assessors and internal quality assurance teams at the centre.

## ASSESSOR & INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURER WORKSHOPS

The IMI runs workshops for assessors and internal quality assurers to update those that have an assessor / internal quality assurer qualification. The workshops ensure that the assessors / internal quality assurers have a thorough understanding of the latest requirements.

These workshops also benefit individuals who are working towards their assessor / internal quality assurer qualifications to provide a greater understanding on how to carry out assessments and quality assurance.

## ACCREDITED ASSESSOR AWARDS

We facilitate interactive 1-day assessments / workshops designed for individuals who are, or who will be, directly involved in the assessment process for IMI Accreditations or the irtec Licensing Scheme. The award provides formal recognition of an assessor's competence and is available in disciplines such as:

- Customer Service and Sales
- Light Vehicle
- Heavy Vehicle (irtec)
- Management

## REGIONAL NETWORK MEETINGS

IMI run free annual regional network meetings for all approved centres. The purpose of these voluntary meetings is for IMI personnel to disseminate information and provide updates on quality and administrative requirements. You will receive updates on qualification development, marketing and communications, as well as new initiatives. It also gives centre personnel the opportunity to discuss any issues facing the centre network.

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVERS AWARDS

We hold annual Outstanding Achievers Awards to celebrate the achievements of IMI candidates, accredited individuals and automotive professionals within the UK retail motor industry.

The Outstanding Achievers Awards showcase the dedication and hard work across the entire industry; from the skilled professionals and managers that are leading teams to success, to the learners who are beginning their careers. They also recognise the centres whose passion, dedication and high quality training provision helps candidates to achieve the very best.

# CENTRE APPROVAL

## WHAT IS AN IMI APPROVED CENTRE?

An organisation such as a school, college, training provider or employer approved by us, to undertake the delivery of Qualifications, Accreditations and / or Quality Assured Programmes.

A 'centre' is not limited to the venue used to conduct and deliver the assessment. The importance of implementing the correct quality management systems, resources and personnel is paramount to attaining IMI approved centre status.

## IMI CENTRE APPROVAL

To apply for IMI centre approval, you will firstly need to complete a submission of interest form via our website, [www.theimi.org.uk](http://www.theimi.org.uk). This is then reviewed by us and you will be provided with login details for IMI Centres Hub, to complete an online approval application.

You will then be appointed an External Quality Assurer (EQA), who will arrange an appropriate visit date to offer support and guidance for your centre's approval.

Centre approval is subject to your organisation demonstrating that you meet all requirements for offering our products and services. Your organisation's capability will be judged against clearly defined criteria (detailed on pages 11-13) during the approval visit.

The full approval process will range in timescale depending on the information provided in the application. Ensuring that all sections in the application are completed fully, and a true account, will enable prompt progression in the recognition process.

*Please note: If you have a date in mind for your first delivery please make sure you allow enough time to complete the process, as you will be unable to deliver an IMI Qualification, Accreditation or Quality Assured Programme until approved to do so.*

## DURATION

IMI centre approval will be given to organisations that meet the criteria in full for a period of 3 years. Centres will be monitored approximately every 6 - 12 months to ensure that all requirements are continually being met.

## APPROVAL COSTS

A centre approval fee is payable when applying to become an IMI approved centre and an annual charge is incurred thereafter. There is also an additional fee for Quality Assured Programme approval and for each Accreditation route and level your centre wishes to offer. The full cost of centre approval can be found at [www.theimi.org.uk](http://www.theimi.org.uk).

*"IMI has been supportive, accessible and prompt in replying regardless of the subject. They pride themselves on quality and use a sustainable approach to growth. IMI listens to views and responds accordingly."*

Stuart Cumming, Centre Co-ordinator  
East Kent College Broadstairs



# WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR APPROVAL VISIT

## PRIOR TO THE VISIT

To prepare for your approval visit, you should ensure you have all the evidence available for review and access to necessary facilities / resources appropriate to the Qualification, Accreditation or Quality Assured Programme.

## DURING THE VISIT

The EQA will carry out the visit, as arranged, and review your centre's capability to meet the criteria to become an IMI approved centre.

The EQA will complete a report detailing their findings and make recommendations for centre approval. Where necessary, an action plan will be produced advising what aspects are required to achieve approval status.

At the end of the approval visit, the EQA will discuss the completed report with you and make recommendations for your centre to achieve recognition, or otherwise.

## AFTER THE VISIT

When you have successfully achieved approval, you will receive full confirmation, along with the centre agreement, approved centre certificate and plaque (valid for 3 years).

Ongoing support and guidance will be provided by your EQA via telephone, email and during monitoring visits. The qualifications services department will also be on hand to assist with enquiries concerning candidate registration, certification or administering online assessments.

In the event that your application is unsuccessful, full advice and guidance will be provided to assist you. A supporting written rationale with issues or concerns relating to the application will also be provided.



*“It is essential to have a good relationship / partnership with your awarding organisation. IMI is extremely supportive at all times, both with apprenticeship programmes and commercial candidates. All staff from EQAs to support staff strive to give excellent customer support.”*

Steve Hogson, Training 2000 Ltd

# CENTRE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## CENTRE CO-ORDINATOR

Each prospective centre must designate a member of staff to be the Centre Co-ordinator. This individual will be the main point of accountability for the quality assurance and management of assessment delivery. The Centre Co-ordinator will be expected to ensure that all requirements are met to achieve and maintain approved centre status.

Key responsibilities include:

- liaising with the EQA and facilitating monitoring and centre re-approval visits
- maintaining quality assurance within the centre, in line with both IMI and regulatory requirements
- co-ordinating the assessment and quality assurance process within the centre
- authorising candidate registration
- approving requests for candidates' certificates
- requesting PINs for assessors / internal quality assurers and invigilators
- requesting approval for additional qualifications
- requesting dispensations (reasonable adjustments / special considerations) for candidates
- ensuring that all information provided by us is circulated to the relevant centre personnel
- notifying us of any changes within the centre

## INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURERS

All IMI approved centres must have an internal quality assurance system in place. It is the responsibility of the Internal Quality Assurer to ensure that the centre's internal quality assurance system meets all our requirements.

The Internal Quality Assurer will be responsible for:

- evaluating the internal assessment process
- developing and maintaining an internal quality assurance / moderation sampling strategy
- ensuring consistency of assessments
- advising and supporting assessors
- keeping accurate records
- liaising with the Centre Co-ordinator to manage the workload of assessors

## ASSESSORS

The role of the assessor is governed primarily by the requirements of the qualification / accreditation being assessed. All assessors must be capable of carrying out assessments to the level expected by us and the centre. They must be able to make assessment decisions against specified criteria which are valid, reliable and fair.

Assessors must also be able to demonstrate current occupational competence. Ideally they should possess an industry-recognised qualification at or above the level of qualification / accreditation they are assessing.

Assessors are responsible for:

- briefing the candidate on the assessment process
- preparing an assessment plan with the candidate
- using different assessment methods
- giving candidates feedback on their performance
- planning the next stage
- keeping accurate records
- contributing to the centre's quality assurance process

## INVIGILATORS

The Centre Co-ordinator must nominate responsible centre personnel to be authorised to invigilate external assessments such as IMI online tests / assessments.

Once authorised, invigilators will be responsible for ensuring that assessment requirements are met at all times and under exam conditions.

## ADMINISTRATORS

Centres may authorise administrative personnel to access the secure centre area of the IMI website and download documents, register candidates and process certificate claims.

# CENTRE MANAGEMENT

To achieve IMI approved centre status you must provide evidence that you are able to meet and maintain the requirements, as specified in each of the following areas.

## QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

A quality management system describes the control measures within a centre to ensure qualifications are delivered correctly. These include policies and processes put in place to enable successful quality operational delivery.

- Clearly stated aims, policies and procedures in relation to becoming an IMI approved centre and the delivery of qualifications offered
- A single named point of accountability to fulfil the role of Centre Co-ordinator
- The Centre Co-ordinator to communicate effectively with their designated EQA, notifying of any changes within the centre on a regular basis
- A process to disseminate the relevant IMI information throughout the centre
- All roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the Centre Co-ordinator and all centre personnel are clearly defined
- A system is in place to ensure that any actions identified during monitoring visits will be carried out and the appropriate corrective measures will be taken within the agreed timescales

## RESOURCES

- You must have sufficient occupationally competent and qualified assessors. The internal quality assessors must meet the requirements of each Qualification, Accreditation or Quality Assured Programme offered and the demand for assessment and quality assurance activities
- You must ensure the resources needed for each Qualification offered are available and will be utilised correctly

- Your organisation must have an invigilation policy that meets our requirements and suitably trained invigilators in place for the delivery of external / online assessments
- You must ensure all premises, facilities and equipment used for assessment purposes are suitable and comply with the relevant health and safety legislation

## INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS

An internal quality assurance system is a series of processes to ensure that there is an ongoing, continuous evaluation of assessment decisions within the centre to maintain quality and consistency.

- All approved centres must have a suitable internal quality assurance strategy
- The roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the internal quality assurance team need to be clearly defined, allocated and understood
- Internal quality assurance procedures and activities must be clearly documented and consistent with IMI requirements and those specific to the Qualifications, Accreditations or Quality Assured Programmes offered

## ADMINISTRATION

- Your centre must have a procedure for candidate registration and certification claims
- Your organisation must be aware of the importance of candidate registration and certification claims being made correctly
- You must have a process to track the progress of candidates towards their target qualification / accreditation
- You must ensure centre personnel are aware of processes for equivalences, exemptions and Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)
- Your organisation must ensure that centre personnel are aware of how to apply for special considerations / reasonable adjustments

## ASSESSMENT DELIVERY

- Assessment methods must be valid, meet the requirements of the qualification's assessment strategy and comply with our requirements. In particular, the importance of the requirements for independent assessment such as our online assessment
- The roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of each assessor and the assessment team must be clearly defined, allocated and understood
- The centre must have a suitable process in place to ensure that all assessment decisions will be recorded accurately using the correct documentation

## CANDIDATE SUPPORT

- Your centre must demonstrate that accurate information, advice and guidance about the qualification / accreditation requirements will be provided to candidates and potential candidates
- Candidates' development needs must be matched against the requirements of the qualification. Individual assessment plans will be established, regularly reviewed and revised accordingly
- Your centre must have an appropriate complaints and appeals procedure, which must be made available to all candidates
- Your centre must demonstrate the provision of opportunities for candidates to reflect upon their individual performance, promote progression and support our aim in ensuring regulatory requirements towards validity are met

## RECORD KEEPING

- Candidate details and records of achievement must be completed accurately and stored securely
- Records of internal quality assurance activities must be maintained and kept up to date
- Candidate assessment information (e.g. portfolios) kept on site must be stored securely in a locked cabinet / room. Centres must keep appropriate archives of assessment information and internal quality assurance for at least 5 years

- Current CPD records of the assessment and quality assurance team must be maintained

## MONITORING & REVIEW

- The centre will establish a customer service / mission statement with measurable aims and objectives
- The effectiveness of the centre's internal quality assurance strategy must be reviewed against IMI Qualification, Accreditation and Quality Assured Programme requirements and corrective measures implemented if necessary
- Any sub-contracted services will be monitored to ensure all requirements are being met
- Candidates' achievements will be monitored and reviewed in relation to the centre's stated equal opportunities policy

## DIVERSITY, EQUALITY & ACCESS TO FAIR ASSESSMENT

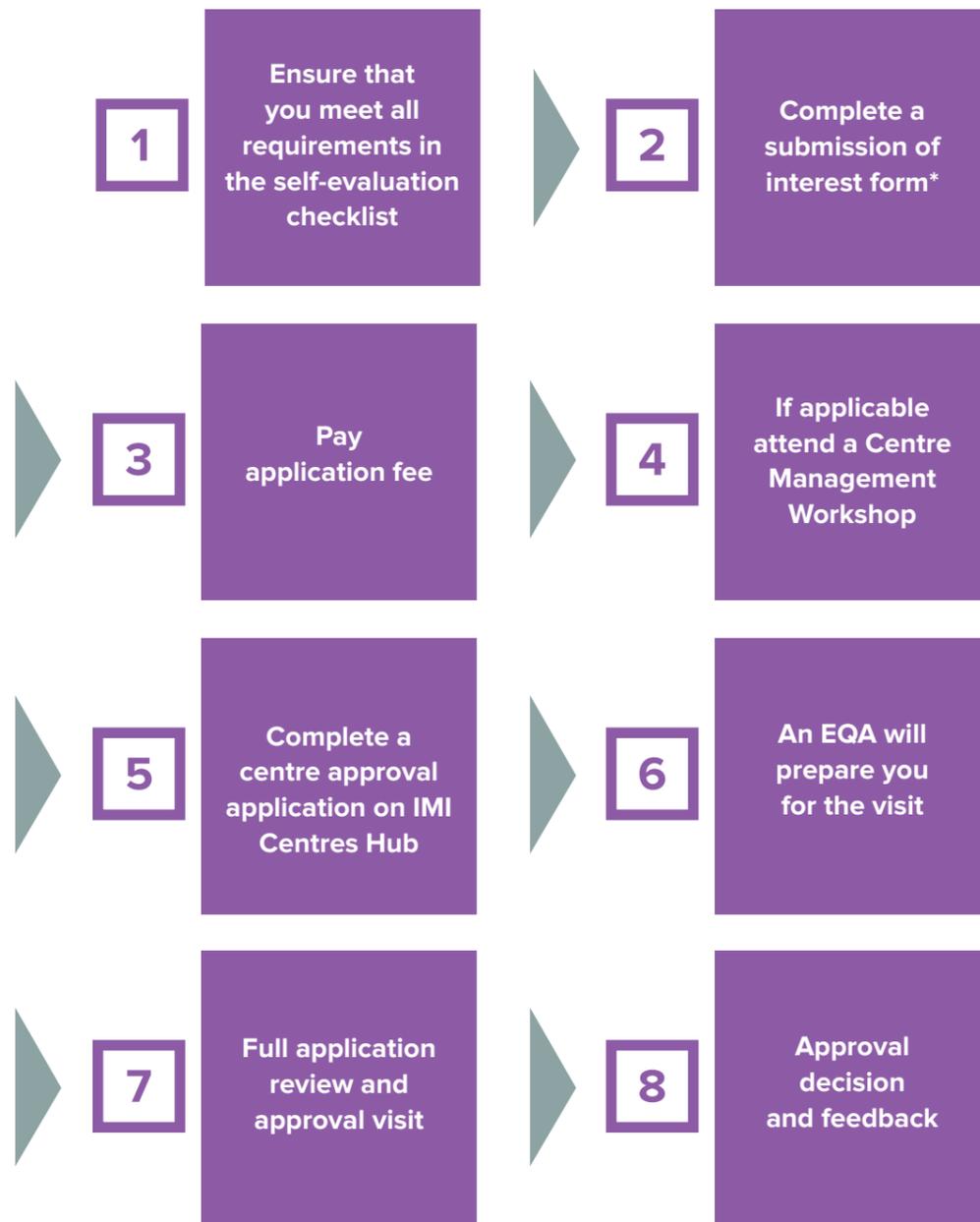
- Your centre must have an equal opportunities policy for candidates and staff
- You must ensure the candidate enrolment system provides equal opportunities monitoring data which will be regularly reviewed
- Your centre must have an effective procedure to ensure that your equal opportunities policy will be implemented where outside providers are to be used
- Your centre must have an appropriate access and fair assessment policy

*"IMI is very professional with excellent customer support. The biggest benefit, in my opinion, for being an IMI approved centre is the modern relevant qualifications for all aspects of the motor industry."*

David Middleton, Ayrshire College

## NEXT STEPS

### HOW TO APPLY



\*The submission of interest form be accessed via our website, [www.theimi.org.uk](http://www.theimi.org.uk).

If you have questions, or wish to discuss any aspect of becoming an IMI approved centre, please contact us on **01992 511521** or email [enquiries@theimi.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@theimi.org.uk).

## SELF-EVALUATION CHECKLIST

### PLEASE TICK TO CONFIRM THAT YOUR CENTRE:

- will have clearly stated aims, policies and procedures in relation to becoming an IMI approved centre
- will have a suitable documented quality management system in place with the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of centre personnel clearly defined and understood
- will have the necessary level of staff, resources and systems in place to support the delivery and assessment of the approved IMI Qualifications, Accreditations and Quality Assured Programmes, specifying a single named point of accountability
- will have appropriate arrangements and agreements in place with any third parties or sub-contracted services, whose goods and services contribute to the delivery and / or assessment of Qualifications, Accreditations or Quality Assured Programmes
- agrees to undertake assessments in accordance with any requirements in the associated Qualification / Accreditation / Quality Assured Programme specification
- has suitable premises, facilities, equipment etc for the Qualifications, Accreditations or Quality Assured Programmes offered that comply with health and safety requirements
- will have appropriate administrative systems in place to track the progress of candidates towards their target awards and to ensure the validity of any claims for certification
- will ensure that all relevant centre staff understand how and when to apply for candidate registration and certification, taking reasonable steps to guard against fraudulent or mistaken claims for certificates
- will maintain accurate candidate records and details of achievement in line with the requirements of the IMI and make these records available for external quality assurance and auditing purposes, as required
- will ensure the security and storage of any examination / assessment material meet the requirements of the IMI in relation to the IMI Qualifications, Accreditations or Quality Assured Programmes you will offer
- will keep relevant assessment and candidate records, for the minimum specified amount of time and make these available to the IMI upon request
- will have an appropriate internal quality assurance arrangement in place to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the approved Qualifications, Accreditations or Quality Assured Programmes
- will have a suitable internal quality assurance strategy and that the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the quality assurance team are clearly defined and understood
- will ensure that candidates receive appropriate inductions and support when enrolled on IMI Qualifications, Accreditations or Quality Assured Programmes
- will have a suitable policy available for candidates to complain or appeal against an assessment decision or centre personnel
- will prevent and manage any potential / actual conflicts of interest in the delivery of our Qualifications / Accreditations / Quality Assured Programmes
- will have an effective equal opportunities and diversity policy in place
- will have an effective reasonable adjustments policy in place
- will have a policy to ensure appropriate access and fair assessment
- will take all reasonable steps to prevent incidents of malpractice or maladministration
- will have an effective policy in place detailing how to prevent and investigate incidents of malpractice and maladministration
- has arrangements in place, where appropriate, to obtain on behalf of its candidates a unique candidate number (ULN/SCN) and a personal learning record

*Centres will be required to submit more detailed answers and, where applicable, provide evidence when making a full formal application.*

*Any reference within this document to becoming an IMI approved centre also includes approval to offer IMI Awards qualifications.*