

# BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

## INTERIM INSPECTION (Short Course Provider)

**PROVIDER:** IMA International Ltd

**ADDRESS:** Drummond House  
89 High Street  
Hurstpierpoint  
West Sussex  
BN6 9RE

**HEAD OF PROVIDER:** Mr Chris Grose

**ACCREDITATION STATUS:** Accredited

**DATE OF INSPECTION:** 24 October 2019

**ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION AND DATE:** 30 January 2020

## **PART A – INTRODUCTION**

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### **1. Background to the provider**

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IMA International Limited (IMA/the Provider) is a private limited company. The Provider offers short internally awarded training courses and consultancy to practitioners in the area of international development with the aim of focusing on creating learning spaces for social change.

Founded in 1983, it has been owned since 2001 by the current Managing Director (MD) and his family who are the shareholders. The MD, who has overseas training and resource development experience, controls governance and oversight of all aspects of the organisation.

The Provider owns office accommodation for its administrative headquarters in Hurstpierpoint, near Brighton. Courses are delivered in rented conference or hotel venues in London and Brighton or recently in overseas countries such as Brussels, Bangkok, Delhi and Cape Town. Only the UK provision is accredited by BAC.

There is a core team of four in-house facilitators and ten associates supporting the training in the United Kingdom and in other countries. All report to the MD. IMA benefits from regular repeat bookings made by both course participants and course sponsors.

### **2. Brief description of the current provision**

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The Provider offers short courses ranging from five to 15 days in duration. There are core courses in Monitoring and Evaluation for Results and Adaptive Project Management. There are specialist courses in Leadership and Management in Development, Knowledge Management, Value for Money, Theory of Change and Strategic Planning, Communication and Strategy for Financial Management, and Results Based Management.

There are IMA internally awarded certificates in Applied Evaluation and in International Development Management. These courses require participants to complete a ten-day course in Monitoring and Evaluation for Results and the Theory of Change or Leadership and Management for Development within a 24-month period. Courses are delivered as face-to-face seminars and facilitated workshops.

Courses can be delivered on demand, however, the vast majority are planned one year in advance. Participants apply online and this is followed up with a telephone interview and a discussion on individual aims and aspirations for the course. There is no cap on the number of participants for any training programme as there is a large number of associate trainers available and training facilities are arranged to meet the number of bookings and number of classes required for each course.

There are no formal course requirements for participants. Most participants are sponsored by their employers, which include public sector organisations, government departments, large multi-national companies, major aid organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies. All participants are aged over 18 years.

At the time of the inspection, one course was running in Value for Money at the New Economics Foundation in London. There were 16 participants from a range of countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. There were equal numbers of male and female participants.

### **3. Inspection process**

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The inspection was carried out by one inspector over one day. The inspector visited the delivery venue in the New Economics Foundation in south London for the duration of the inspection. Meetings were held with the Managing Director and training facilitators. Training sessions were observed and an interview with participants was undertaken. The Provider responded to all requests for information in a timely and professional manner.

#### 4. Inspection History

<b>Inspection Type</b>	<b>Date</b>
Stage 2	4 December 2008
Stage 3	27 April 2009
Interim	19 April 2010
Re-accreditation	6 December 2012
Interim	2 March 2015
Re-accreditation	25 August 2017

## **PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE**

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*The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution.*

### **1. Significant changes since the last inspection**

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There have been no significant changes since the last inspection.

### **2. Response to actions points in last report**

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*6.1 A clear and published policy on participant attendance and punctuality must be included in the welcome pack for participants.*

There is now a clear and informative policy that states the attendance requirements in the course terms and conditions. The welcome pack effectively references punctuality and attendance requirements in the Code of Conduct.

*11.3 IMA must introduce a regular appraisal procedure and complete regular classroom observations of its trainers. These must be documented.*

A new Human Resource (HR) Adviser was appointed early 2019 and has been given the responsibility for managing the performance management of full-time staff. Part-time staff are self-employed and are managed separately by the MD. The monitored process is comprehensive and provides a strong foundation for effective quality assurance and continuous improvement.

Classroom observations have been undertaken by managers for all trainers and facilitators. Records demonstrate a good understanding of the process and include trainer's reflections on the learning outcomes. There is also a summary of the observer's judgements and a note of the professional dialogue undertaken and targets set. The results of these observations have been included in the Provider's quality assurance process. A system to support peer observations to include self-employed trainers is currently under review as part of the quality assurance process.

*11.4 IMA must keep a record of the training its trainers undergo, including external and in-house training.*

There is an accurate central record of staff recruitment, management and training requirements. This central record is held on a secured access system and includes records of all staff training.

*17.5 The policy to avoid discrimination and a policy on abusive behaviour must be included in the welcome pack for participants.*

There is an appropriate policy statement in the welcome pack that states the Provider's position on discrimination. The Provider's code of conduct for participants is designed for professionals and contains a satisfactory reference to inclusivity and equality.

*17.7 IMA's training staff must undergo appropriate training to ensure that the participants are protected from the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.*

Training in the prevention of radicalisation and extremism was undertaken in 2017 by all staff who have face-to-face contact with participants, including managers, trainers and facilitators. Details are recorded in the staff central record.

*24.4 General guidance on health and safety at the training venue must be made available in the welcome pack for participants. This must also be made available for staff and visitors to the administrative premises.*

The welcome pack contains an appropriate range of guidance and highlights the responsibilities of trainers and participants for health and safety and well-being. Specific information is also included in fact sheets for the most frequently used venues.

General guidance at the administrative premises has been reviewed and is now organised to clearly convey the Provider's guidance and responsibilities for staff and visitors.

### 3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

*It is recommended that a formal letter of achievement should accompany the certificate of attendance. This should include information about the assignments and content to the participants completed whilst on the course.*

All participants receive a certificate of attendance and those on the certificate courses are now sent a letter along with their certificates of attendance. The informal letter from the MD includes a review summary of the course content and the participants' achievements.

*IMA is recommended to consider offering a packaged course option, which includes airport to hotel transfer and accommodation.*

The Provider considered offering a packaged course option and made good use of stakeholder feedback in its review. Nearly all stakeholders considered it was not necessary for the current provision. However, the Provider will keep it under review for the future.

*It is recommended that a list of the participants, with details of their countries of origin, be sent out to those attending a course prior to their departure from their countries. This would enable participants to make arrangements for travelling and securing accommodation together with other participants.*

The Provider has made good use of participants' feedback and reviewed their data protection policy. As a result, the decision was made not to respond to this recommendation. However, where there are multiple delegates from a single organisation, the Provider suggests at the time of booking that they may wish to consider sharing their staffs' contact details in advance of the course.

### 4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

#### 4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

**The standards are judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

#### **Comments**

The Provider is effectively managed. There are very well organised administration functions that are consistently monitored by the MD for effectiveness and accuracy as well as driving improvement.

Staff recruitment processes are supported by effective policies and a robust central record of staff management that ensures all recruitment, performance management and training are recorded and maintained accurately.

Quality assurance systems are securely embedded and provide the MD with accurate and timely information on the performance of all aspects of the business.

#### 4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

**The standards are judged to be:**  Met  Partially Met  Not Met

## Comments

There is highly effective course management that includes plenty of pre-course information sent to participants in advance and an individual needs analysis and personal objectives are collected and collated prior to arrival. This information is used to support session planning and feedback is collected daily throughout the course which is used to inform the next sessions planning. This process ensures the courses successfully respond to the individual and collective needs of the group. All participants complete the courses they are registered for.

Trainers and facilitators are highly qualified and experienced in their subject areas and consequently courses are very well delivered.

Participants report they find the course materials very useful and training methods are motivating and highly engaging. They also value the networking opportunities the provision promotes.

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### 4.3 Participant Welfare (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

#### Comments

Participants receive good levels of information prior to and on arrival. The course induction includes an appropriate overview of the course content and health and safety information that effectively provides a solid basis for individual and collaborative learning and personal development.

All courses provide an element of social relaxation and cultural development included in the course cost. Participants were delighted with the opportunity to visit a national art museum and eat in a local public house and it generated a great deal of recognition of British culture and social values that endorsed some of the learning points in the course content.

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### 4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

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**The standards are judged to be:**

Met     Partially Met     Not Met

#### Comments

IMA has ownership of the administrative head office base and hires external training venues that include established training premises and hotels on demand.

The delivery premises in south London is easily accessible and provide participants with a safe, secure and comfortable environment for learning and networking with their peers and for the trainers to prepare and deliver their seminars.

The training areas include seminar rooms that offer sufficient space for participants to work, study and relax in comfort. There is also a large area for communal eating that successfully enables learning and development to extend beyond the seminar rooms. Participants consider this as a highly successful aid to their studies as well as providing opportunities to make new contacts.

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### 4.5 Compliance Declaration

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**Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.**

Yes     No

**PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS**

**STRENGTHS**

There is an established and effective management team that successfully underpins the ethos and focus of the training programmes.

Managers and administrators are supported by highly effective quality assurance and continuous improvement systems.

The training team is highly effective in delivering inspiring programmes that enable participants to affect changes in their working practices and support change in their workplaces.

**ACTIONS REQUIRED**

None

High     Medium     Low

**RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT *(to be reviewed at the next inspection)***

It is recommended that full and part-time facilitators are given the opportunity to undertake peer observations of seminars as part of their performance management and continuing professional development.

**COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS - FURTHER COMMENTS, IF APPLICABLE**

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