APRS
the professional recording association

Accreditation Board
The Music and Sound Industry
Supporting Education

MPG
music producers guild

Introduction

Thank you for your enquiry regarding industry accreditation. I have pleasure in enclosing information about the accreditation scheme and appropriate submission forms. This scheme is a cooperative initiative by the Association of Professional Recording Services and the Music Producers' Guild. The purpose of the scheme is to give industrial support and advice to educational and training institutions.

Accreditation will only be available for courses validated by a recognised validation authority. Accreditation is given to specific courses and not as a blanket accreditation to institutions to run courses. Note should be taken of the criteria regarding franchising of courses.

The APRS/MPG Accreditation Board is willing to process accreditation concurrently with validation and our officers will be happy to sit on validation panels. Courses already validated can gain accreditation retrospectively.

Documentation on the accreditation criteria and procedures is enclosed. Initially we will be happy to receive copies of your validation documentation, to be able to set the process in motion.

£2500 for each course plus VAT. The expenses of assessors who will visit your organisation will also be charged for and agreed in advance. The accreditation fee is reviewed at the board's discretion and may be subject to amendment.

Expenses will be agreed between the parties involved, dependent upon the amount of time and effort that APRS and MPG officers are required to put into the advisory process.

Please note that officers are members of industry professional bodies acting in an advisory capacity and on a voluntary basis.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

David Ward
Director
APRS Education and Training Initiative.

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Function of the Accreditation Board

Accreditation of an academic or training course by an appropriate trade body is primarily an indicator that such a course, when completed successfully, will meet the expectations agreed by the membership of that body. Accreditation will indicate to employers the standard of knowledge and expertise that can be expected from a prospective employee who has completed the course.

Accreditation gives potential students assurance of the course's integrity and worth and enhances the credibility of the educational establishment at which it is conducted. It is also a means by which the industry can support education and training.

For this reason the board sees accreditation as a supportive process and not a judgmental mechanism.

The constituent member bodies of the Accreditation Board have combined their experience and expertise to bring a concerted and rigorous approach to the accreditation process, making it beneficial to academia, students, industry and the music industry professions generally.

Accreditation will apply to courses that have components in either or all of:

- Recording Technology
- Music Technology
- Music Production
- Music Business Studies.

Only courses validated by a recognised validation authority will be considered for accreditation. Courses that have not been so validated must apply to such an authority and be granted validation before accreditation can be applied for, although accreditation can be processed concurrently with validation.

Accreditation will be in line with emerging National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications and practical aspects of the course will reflect these standards.

The Accreditation Board, having taken the recommendation of its assessors will accredit courses under various categories, which are outlined below.

These are under three main headings

- Full time or part time degree and diploma courses
- Short Orientation Courses
- Post Graduate Courses

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Function of the Accreditation Board (2)

As representatives of the contributing trade and professional bodies the board recognises that validation and accreditation are distinct operations and that there will be a difference in emphasis between them.

Validation can be looked upon as being concerned mainly with academic standards and keeping of the rules of the validating body. Industrial accreditation is concerned not only with the course content but also with the environment in which the course is delivered and the professional outlook and experience of those who deliver it.

Accreditation will be considered in relation to the employment needs of the associations' members (this includes the needs of self-employed and freelance personnel).

The criteria for accreditation have been set and agreed by the Board of Directors of the institutions, after consultation with the organisations' members, academics and working professionals in the industry.

The assessors trained by the organisation and the accreditation panel members are working professionals with the experience and knowledge to evaluate the industrial relevance of a course and whether a course is delivering and able to deliver on its promises.

Should any institution apply for accreditation and be refused initially or subsequently the Board will accept no responsibility for any outcomes of this refusal.

However, having received recommendations the Board will wish to avoid being prescriptive to educational establishments but will hope to encourage initiatives in course design, provided that a clear educational objective is identified and a related teaching policy is evident. In this way the industry can support educational institutions.

It may be necessary, to indicate where improvements could be made to the course structure or content.

Accreditation may be conditional on the board being assured that these improvements are being implemented.

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Accreditation Procedures

A submission package should consist of FOUR sets of documentation for each course, containing the following information:

1. Completed Form ACI.

2. Course documentation as submitted for the latest course review or validation event, together with the subsequent approval statement or letter indicating any conditions attached to the approval.

3. Samples of relevant recent examination papers, tests and assignments.

4. List of projects currently being undertaken.

5. Additional information, in any convenient form, to address each of the following issues, if not already covered in 2:

- Current academic staff list giving names, qualifications, appointment grades, whether full-time or part-time, industrial experience, special technological interests and recent staff development, research interests. (Please indicate which staff members are directly involved with the course).
- Details of assessment procedures, examinations procedures and generic marking criteria.
- Entrance qualifications of students and awards students have obtained during the last 3 years.
- Employment statistics and details of students who have completed the course during the last 3 years.
- Short courses, research and development work conducted in the department.
- Studio, workshop and equipment facilities available to the course, together with details of technician, maintenance and administrative support.
- Financial resources available annually to the department (capital, revenue, earned income) over the last 3 years.
- Any aspect of course philosophy and management which the department may wish particularly to draw to the attention of the Board.

The Board is anxious not to place unnecessary procedural demands on a department making an accreditation submission. Therefore no obligation should be felt to separately submit the additional information requested in 5 if these issues are adequately addressed in the course documentation requested in 2. Representatives of the Board will normally visit the educational establishment to discuss the course, meet students, inspect facilities and project work. A date and timetable for this will be agreed with the institution

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Accredited Course Characteristics

The APRS is committed to the accreditation of courses to meet the expectations of employer members (including self-employed personnel). In accordance with the accreditation policies of these members, the Board requires courses submitted for accreditation to show that they have been validated by a recognised validation authority.

In carrying out accreditation the board places particular emphasis on the following aspects of courses.

- Integration and relevance of subject matter.
- The impact of new technologies and the exclusion of obsolete material.
- Adequate coverage of fundamental principles of sound engineering and music production applications.
- Experimental project and sound design work offering intellectual challenge.
- Appropriate assessment methods.
- The maintenance of output standards.
- Preparation of students for work in interdisciplinary teams and the employability of successful students.
- The industrial and academic experience of teaching staff.
- Adequate service back-up facilities.

The Board will also be concerned with the environment in which the course operates. To this end it will need to be informed about staffing, service provision, industrial links, relevant resources and the availability of resources to students.

Submissions must be accompanied by a completed Form ACI and may consist of course review or validation documents if these demonstrate the features listed above.

If an accredited course is subsequently franchised and the franchisee must apply for accreditation separately and immediately.

If accreditation is not granted to the franchisee, accreditation will be withdrawn from the franchiser.
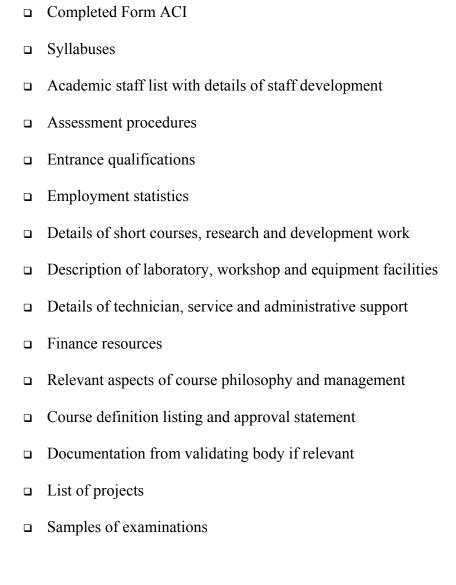
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Submission check list

Does your submission contain four copies of the following information as detailed in "The Procedure" section of the Academic Accreditation pack?

Please tick the boxes and indicate where the information can be found within the documentation.

- ❏ Completed Form ACI

- ❏ Syllabuses

- ❏ Academic staff list with details of staff development

- ❏ Assessment procedures

- ❏ Entrance qualifications

- ❏ Employment statistics

- ❏ Details of short courses, research and development work

- ❏ Description of laboratory, workshop and equipment facilities

- ❏ Details of technician, service and administrative support

- ❏ Finance resources

- ❏ Relevant aspects of course philosophy and management

- ❏ Course definition listing and approval statement

- ❏ Documentation from validating body if relevant

- ❏ List of projects

- ❏ Samples of examinations

Application Form
Submission for the Accreditation of an Academic Course

Please complete a separate form for each course and return it with your submission to the address below

Name of educational establishment …………………………………………

Awarding body …………………………………………

Please detail any franchising arrangements ……………………………

Course type: full-time, part-time, etc. and duration ……………………

Name of Department …………………………………………

Head of Department …………………………………………

Course Leader …………………………………………

Name and telephone number of person to contact in the event of queries

…………………………………………

Period of current validation: From intake in ……………………………

Indicate whether validation was the result of an internal or external process ……

If internal, attach a separate sheet showing composition of validation panel

Person authorising this submission …………………………………………

Position within establishment …………………………………………

Signature …………………………………………

Date …………………………………………