

# **ISTR Biosafety Accreditation Scheme**

## **-Training in Biological Safety - Level 1**

### Accreditation of training courses - Information for Course Providers

#### **Background**

The Institute of Safety in Technology and Research (ISTR) has developed an accreditation scheme for biological safety practitioners. This new scheme has the support of biosafety practitioners and the enforcement agencies. ISTR has determined two attainment levels; foundation level (Level 1) and the Biosafety Professional (BSP, Level 2). Attainment at Level 1 is achieved through satisfactory completion of a modular training course, plus two years' relevant experience.

As part of the scheme, ISTR will accredit training course providers to provide separate course units or the complete course material at Level 1. This is open to all providers: commercial, higher education, academic, training colleges or organisations or those providing in-house courses who wish to develop these further. The benefits for course providers are access to a targeted audience, use of the name and reputation of ISTR, listing as accredited provider in ISTR information outputs, assistance with course development from recognised biosafety experts and low cost packages.

#### **The process**

Training providers who wish to apply for accreditation are provided on initial application with a set of learning outcomes for the complete Level 1 course, together with definitions of terms. It is the responsibility of the provider to develop the course material to ensure the learning outcomes are achieved. Initially the provider is invited to submit a course or unit(s) outline for consideration by ISTR, together with the full fee, subject to conditions. Following a favourable response, the provider will submit a more detailed course content and assessment methods (questions, exercises, etc) to ISTR in strict confidence. An ISTR approved assessor will make a preliminary judgement on whether the criteria have been met.

If successful, ISTR will accredit the course provisionally for a maximum period of twelve months. The provider can use the ISTR logo on their training material during this time. Final judgement on accreditation will include the assessor witnessing the training. ISTR approval at this stage will result in accreditation which will last for a further 2 years. ISTR will promote providers' details through its channels and membership. Members/attendees feedback will be solicited at intervals to ensure high quality of delivery is maintained.

#### **Course duration**

It is anticipated that the full course can be delivered in 4.5 to 5 days, including time allowed for a formal assessment. There are 10 units, containing 42 elements, but that does not necessarily mean that each unit must occupy half a day. A total 'contact time' of up to 40 hours may be required but this can include 10-12 hours preparatory homework. Course providers can apply for individual or groups of units/elements to be accredited. Any such application must include an estimate of contact time for each unit.

#### **Aim at Biosafety Level 1**

*To provide a broad knowledge base for those wishing to have an understanding of*

*the basic requirements of biosafety and its management.*

Typically, these are biosafety officers, biosafety administrators for universities, research laboratories, or members of biosafety committees. The Level 1 (Foundation) Biosafety Officer will be able to comprehend and apply the essential concepts of 'biological safety' in executing the day-to-day tasks of advising on, monitoring and enforcing safety standards within their organisation.

### **Objectives**

To provide the individual at Level 1 with:

- An awareness of what biosafety means
- A thorough knowledge of their role
- An understanding of their knowledge and resource requirements
- An appropriate knowledge and understanding of relevant legislative requirements
- An ability to apply that knowledge and understanding in key processes
- An understanding of current good practice

### **Summary of learning outcomes**

On completion of the course modules, students will be in the position to help the employer comply with the relevant legislation, be aware of the penalties for failing to comply and be in a position to give reliable, professional and informed advice and information to colleagues, managers and to liaise effectively with the enforcing authorities. The student will learn how each of the component parts of the course inter-link providing a clear strand encompassing hazard, risk management, licensing, auditing and ultimate destruction of biological agents.

The student will gain the confidence to communicate with laboratory staff, managers and occupational health advisers to the extent of becoming a key member of staff in the control of biological agents in their organisation.