



IAF AEAR | AUTOMOTIVE EDUCATION | FIRST EDITION

APPLICANT GUIDE

Practical guidance for route selection, self-evaluation, learning-outcome evidence and the accreditation journey.

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Document control

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Purpose and use

Practical guidance for route selection, self-evaluation, learning-outcome evidence and the accreditation journey.

This is one coordinated eight-document set. The main Standard contains all institution categories, learning profiles, automotive specialties and internal scheme directives. Separate operational and writable documents implement the same requirements. This prepared edition does not itself grant accreditation or recognition.

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01 Choose the correct route

Institutional Accreditation examines a named institution or automotive education unit. Programme Accreditation examines each qualification separately. Learning Offering Recognition examines a bounded assessed short course or micro-credential. You can apply for several routes, but each scope receives its own decision.

A programme can be reviewed without an institutional grant if its parent systems are fully assessed. Existing institutional evidence may be reused when current and relevant. It never replaces the programme's own learner outcomes.

IAF membership is an administrative condition for a formal grant, consistent with the current application route. It provides no educational exemption or assurance of success. These documents are prepared for adoption and do not themselves open a live scheme.

02 Name your institution and award authority accurately

Identify the legal provider, delivery sites, automotive unit, awarding entity and any franchise or validation partner. Explain permissions and restrictions in each jurisdiction. Translate titles faithfully; a college label does not automatically mean a particular level.

If a university seeks assurance only for its automotive faculty, say so. Do not describe unrelated faculties as accredited. If several qualifications share a department, list each separately.

The scheme offers sectoral assurance. It does not itself confer public operating authority, degree equivalence, professional registration or rights in another country. State actual acceptance agreements by name and scope only after they exist.

03 Select a profile and specialties

Choose the P1-P6 profile that matches the complexity and independence of the graduate's demonstrated work. Keep the local qualification title and credits separately visible. Profiles are not automatic national level conversions.

Select all D01-D20 specialties materially promised by the title or exit outcomes. A general automotive technician programme may combine maintenance, electrical diagnostics and relevant propulsion specialties; a software programme needs a different, defensible selection.

An interdisciplinary programme must demonstrate integration as well as selected specialty outcomes. LR may focus on a narrower claim, but its safety, integrity and assessment requirements remain mandatory.

04 Check whether you have enough operating history

IA needs one completed academic operating year. PA needs a completed graduating cohort with credible assessment and an improvement review. LR needs one completed assessed delivery. A future curriculum, empty workshop or planned first class is not operating evidence.

A new institution or programme may seek developmental Candidate status after readiness review. Candidate status is not accreditation. Its maximum initial term is 36 months, with one further period up to 36 months based on verified milestones.

Plan the route around real cohort dates. Completing the first cohort or reaching the end of candidacy does not automatically create accreditation; an independent decision remains necessary.

05 Write a candid self-evaluation

For each requirement explain what you do, where the source evidence is, what result it produced and what remains weak. Label controls planned, implemented or verified effective. Avoid long generic policy descriptions unsupported by actual practice.

Use exact evidence IDs, versions and page or dataset locations. Link common institutional material once and cite it from each programme. Preserve separate cohort, assessment and outcome evidence for each qualification.

Disclose complaints, failed assessments, safety incidents, staff gaps and ineffective improvements. A transparent corrective process is more credible than a claim that no problem has ever occurred.

06 Build an outcome-to-evidence chain

Map O01-O10, each profile dimension and every selected specialty requirement to teaching, practice, assessment, rubric and individual learner work. Define a pass rule before assessment. A list of course titles or contact hours is not proof of attainment.

Use direct evidence appropriate to the outcome: observed work, design, calculations, software, reports, questioning and defense. In group projects identify each learner's contribution and test their understanding.

Every mandatory outcome and safety-critical step must be passed. An unsafe task cannot be compensated by a strong written exam. Use at least two observed occasions for safety-critical practical competence, with an abnormal or stop-and-escalate condition assessed safely.

07 Prove actual workshop and staff capacity

Show that every learner can access appropriate equipment, consumables, technical information and competent supervision. An inventory is only the beginning: provide timetables, maintenance records, capacity calculations and access agreements.

Match supervision to hazard, learner maturity, task and applicable local requirements. Protect minors through age-appropriate tasks and safeguarding. Use de-energized rigs or safe surrogates where live work is unnecessary or prohibited.

Keep staff subject knowledge and assessment skill current through verified practice, development and review. A qualification or event attendance alone does not establish competence for every task.

08 Manage placements and partnerships

Agree outcomes, tasks, learner rights, supervision, reporting, assessment and emergency arrangements with each placement host. Check the host before placement and monitor actual learner experience.

Hours and signatures do not establish competence. Assess the learner's performance and provide an equivalent route if a placement fails through no fault of the learner.

The institution remains accountable for partner delivery. A headquarters grant does not automatically cover another campus, country, employer academy or translated franchise programme.

09 Use digital delivery and AI responsibly

Demonstrate that the mode measures the same competence. A video or screen simulation may teach a procedure yet fail to assess physical workmanship, tool use or safe handling. Explain what each digital activity can and cannot prove.

For each assessment, state what AI assistance is allowed, what must be disclosed and how independent reasoning will be verified. Use human review and a fair response opportunity for suspected misconduct.

Test accessibility, account/identity controls, support, outages and recovery. Keep confidential learner, vehicle and employer data out of unauthorized services or public technical demonstrations.

10 Prepare for the independent visit

The team chooses learner samples from your full register and inspects every proposed initial IA/PA site. Provide access to original evidence and an accurate schedule of teaching and assessment.

The minimum work sample is all completers for cohorts of ten or fewer; otherwise at least the larger of ten or ten percent rounded up, for each programme and site/mode stratum. Risk or variation may require more.

Expect private learner interviews, staff discussion, assessment observation and host sampling. Do not coach responses or replace the selected sample with your strongest learners. Give the team safe access and explain genuine logistical constraints early.

11 Understand findings and decisions

This is a requirement-based decision, not a points competition. Full accreditation or recognition requires all applicable requirements Met. Critical, Major and Pending findings prevent a grant.

Conditional IA/PA is limited to one to three isolated Minor findings when all safety, integrity and mandatory outcomes are already demonstrated. Close those findings within 90 calendar days. Conditional status lasts no more than twelve months and cannot be repeatedly renewed.

Full IA/PA lasts four years and LR two years, subject to monitoring and status review. Annual reporting and material-change obligations continue throughout the term.

12 Respond, appeal and protect learners

You receive fifteen calendar days to correct factual errors in the draft report before an adverse final decision. Cite the precise fact and supporting source. A disagreement should address evidence or rule application, not the reviewer's independence.

An accreditation appeal may be filed within thirty calendar days of the reasoned notice for material factual error, procedure, conflict or misapplication. A separate panel reviews it; an appeal does not automatically lift an urgent safety suspension.

Maintain teach-out, transfer and records arrangements. Do not promise another institution's credit acceptance without agreement, or hide a status change from affected learners.

13 Maintain and communicate the exact scope

Use the route, programme/unit, sites, mode, language and validity dates in the public record. Do not label all programmes accredited because the institution has IA, or describe Candidate status as provisional accreditation.

Seek approval before adding a campus, mode, partner, profile, awarding body or materially different curriculum under the IAF claim. Notify serious harm, fraud or loss of authority within 48 hours and other material changes within thirty calendar days.

Submit annual reports within thirty calendar days after each anniversary, plan mid-cycle review by month 24 for IA/PA, and apply for renewal at least six months before expiry. A pending renewal does not keep an expired claim active.

14 Prepare the application package

Use the institutional application for IA; use one programme/offering application for each PA or LR. Attach the self-evaluation, evidence index, scope rows, outcomes matrix, cohort data, staff/resources and signed declarations.

Use the common checklist and selected specialty pages for self-checking, while leaving independent assessor and decision fields for their owners. Copy records with unique IDs or submit separate files to avoid duplicated PDF field names overwriting values.

Save and reopen fillable PDFs before submission. Put long responses in readable attachments and cite them rather than relying on hidden scrolling text. Use the approved signature or authenticated authorization method and identify the applicable Constitution and scheme editions.

Route and profile selection tables

Route	Prepare this evidence
IA Institutional Accreditation	Assurance of governance, resources and learner protection within a precisely named automotive education institution or unit. It does not automatically accredit individual programmes. At least one completed academic operating year and verifiable implementation; each named site evaluated.
PA Programme Accreditation	A separate decision for each named qualification programme, profile, awarding entity, curriculum version, site, mode and language. Shared evidence may be reused; decisions remain separate. At least one completed graduating cohort with assessed outcomes and an improvement review.
LR Learning Offering Recognition	A bounded assessed short course, continuing-development activity or micro-credential. Recognition is of the offering, not of an entire degree or the personal competence of every attendee. At least one completed delivery and assessment cycle with verified learner evidence. Attendance-only events are outside this route.

Choose by demonstrated exit capability

Profile	Main integrative evidence
P1 Foundation and technical secondary	An individually assessed safe task plus a short explanation and reflective improvement record.
P2 Service and maintenance technician	Two observed occasions for each safety-critical competence, including an abnormal condition, with individual verification.
P3 Applied engineering technologist and advanced technician	An applied integration or improvement project with measured verification and an individually defended contribution.
P4 Engineering design and development	A substantial design project with alternatives, analysis, validation, limitations and an individual oral defense.
P5 Advanced professional and specialist study	An advanced project or dissertation with independent examination, reproducible methods where feasible and declared limits.
P6 Research and doctoral development	An original thesis or equivalent research portfolio, independent examination and documented research integrity.

Specialty selection map

Specialty	Scope to consider
D01 Vehicle architecture and mechanical engineering	Vehicle systems, chassis, structures, dynamics, mechanical design and integration.
D02 Combustion, hybrid and alternative-fuel systems	Engines, hybrid integration, transmissions, fuel and exhaust systems.
D03 Electric propulsion, batteries and thermal systems	Electric drives, power electronics, battery systems, energy management and thermal control.
D04 Electrical systems, mechatronics and diagnostics	Sensors, actuators, networks, low-voltage systems and integrated fault finding.
D05 Software, cybersecurity, data and artificial intelligence	Embedded software, secure development, vehicle data, analytics and AI-enabled systems.
D06 Driver assistance, automation and connected mobility	Perception, control, connected vehicle functions and bounded automated operation.
D07 Manufacturing, robotics and industrial operations	Production engineering, automation, assembly, tooling and industrial maintenance.
D08 Quality, metrology, testing and technical assurance	Measurement, laboratory work, inspection, validation, reliability and quality improvement.
D09 Maintenance, repair and service technology	General vehicle maintenance, workshop service, diagnosis and customer handover.
D10 Body, collision repair and refinishing	Damage assessment, structural repair, joining, coatings and post-repair verification.

Specialty selection map (continued)

Specialty	Scope to consider
D11 Materials, joining and circular manufacturing	Metals, polymers, composites, joining, remanufacturing and material recovery.
D12 Charging, energy infrastructure and vehicle-grid integration	Charging equipment, electrical interfaces, energy management and customer service.
D13 Commercial, heavy-duty and off-highway vehicles	Trucks, buses, agricultural, construction and specialist automotive equipment.
D14 Two-wheelers, three-wheelers and micromobility	Powered two/three-wheelers, light electric mobility and relevant small-vehicle systems.
D15 Design, ergonomics, accessibility and human factors	Vehicle and service design, interfaces, comfort, inclusive access and user research.
D16 Sustainability, resources and end-of-life systems	Lifecycle impacts, energy, materials, emissions, circularity and responsible transition.
D17 Fleet, logistics and mobility operations	Fleet management, transport logistics, shared mobility and service reliability.
D18 Retail, aftersales, parts and automotive business	Dealers, parts distribution, service management, warranty and technical customer support.
D19 Motorsport, prototypes and performance development	Competition engineering, prototype development, performance analysis and specialist testing.
D20 Automotive education, technical leadership and knowledge transfer	Teacher preparation, assessor development, training design and technical education leadership.

Institutional integrity and learner protection

01 Authority, identity and programme boundaries

Lawful operation and award authority: Identity, operating permissions, award authority and restriction register.

Defined automotive scope: Controlled scope schedule and organization/programme map.

IAF membership and ethical separation: Membership reference, role separation and impartiality controls.

Honest status and claims: Public information, claim review and agreement evidence.

02 Governance, leadership and financial continuity

Accountable educational governance: Delegations, minutes, learner input and decisions.

Resources and continuity: Resource plan, viability review, continuity and teach-out provisions.

Risk, independence and protected reporting: Risk register, declarations, reporting route and action examples.

Controlled documentation: Master list, approval records and cohort version history.

03 Learner information, admission and progression

Accurate pre-enrolment information: Prospectus, learner agreement, change notices and remedies.

Fair entry and prior-learning recognition: Admissions, transfer and prior-learning decisions with outcome mapping.

Progress monitoring and intervention: Cohort register, interventions and reconciled completion data.

Academic review and learner remedies: Learner appeal procedure, case records and systemic remedies.

04 Safeguarding, inclusion and wellbeing

Child and vulnerable-learner safeguarding: Safeguarding risk plan, appointments, host checks and response route.

Accessible learning and fair adjustment: Accessibility review, agreed adjustments and equivalence rationale.

Wellbeing and respectful environment: Support information, staff briefing and anonymized response records.

Learner voice and privacy: Feedback process, independent interviews and safe reporting.

Learning, resources and assessment

05 Educational purpose and outcome architecture

Purpose, profile and sector relevance: Purpose statement, profile rationale and consultation evidence.

Measurable outcomes and mapping: Outcome-to-curriculum-to-assessment matrix and evidence index.

Coherent curriculum and workload: Curriculum map, workload analysis and prerequisite logic.

Programme review and improvement: Annual review, changes, transition and effectiveness evidence.

06 Teaching, faculty and technical currency

Competent educators and assessors: Competence matrix, verified records, task authorization and observations.

Staffing and workload capacity: Timetables, workloads, supervision rationale and cover plan.

Continuing technical development: Development plans, practice exposure and applied improvements.

Effective and inclusive delivery: Delivery plans, teaching observations, feedback and language checks.

07 Facilities, workshops and physical safety

Safe learning environment: Risk assessments, permissions, inspections and emergency exercises.

Equipment access and fitness: Inventory, access agreements, maintenance and usage schedules.

Measurement and controlled practice: Instrument checks, fault controls, model validation and rig records.

Energy-system and emerging hazards: Technology-specific risk plan, safe surrogates and competence boundaries.

08 Assessment validity and individual competence

Valid assessment design: Assessment blueprint, rubric, pre-use validation and revisions.

Authentic individual performance: Individual work, observation, questioning and authenticity checks.

Non-compensable safety and outcome gates: Outcome completion record, critical-step checks and reassessment evidence.

Consistency, moderation and reassessment: Moderation sample, disagreement resolution and reassessment records.

Delivery, integration and outcomes

09 Work-based learning and partnerships

Approved learning agreements: Institution-host-learner agreement and suitability review.

Protected and supervised work: Host checks, task limits, learner contact and incident records.

Observed workplace attainment: Task logs, observation, assessor judgments and replacement arrangements.

Partner and subcontractor control: Partner register, agreements, monitoring and public wording.

10 Digital, blended and AI-enabled education

Equivalent outcomes across modes: Mode equivalence, practical access and validated alternatives.

Reliable and accessible digital learning: Access tests, support, backup and outage/recovery records.

Responsible AI and assessment integrity: AI-use rules, task design, disclosures and fair-review cases.

Data security and research ethics: Data inventory, access controls, permissions and incident response.

11 Research, design and integrative work

Integrated final demonstration: Project or task brief, individual evidence and final rubric.

Supervision and research integrity: Supervision plan, ethics decisions, data provenance and integrity record.

Independent examination and challenge: Examiner declarations, defense record and corrections.

Responsible transfer and innovation: Contribution and rights record, bounded claims and verification access.

12 Outcomes, equity and continuous improvement

Cohort evidence and denominators: Cohort dataset, definitions, reconciliations and disaggregated review.

Employment and stakeholder outcomes: Follow-up method, response rates, outcome categories and actions.

Internal review and verified improvement: Internal review, action register and effectiveness checks.

Future relevance and resilience: Technology watch, renewal plan and evaluated curriculum changes.

Worked preparation examples

Examples are illustrative and do not describe accredited institutions.

A university with three programmes

One automotive faculty may apply for IA, while its mechanical engineering, electric mobility and automotive software qualifications each apply for PA. The four cases may share governance, library and privacy evidence, but each programme has its own profile, specialty mapping, graduating-cohort sample and decision.

A technical secondary school

Use category S and a justified P1 or other actual exit profile. Show integration with general education, age-appropriate task limits, supervised workshop access, safeguarding and learner support. Do not advertise completion as independent permission to carry out hazardous work.

A focused battery-service course

Use LR with a clearly bounded task and relevant D03/D09 outcomes. Explain prerequisites, supervision, safe rigs, assessment and limits. Recognition concerns this assessed offering, not all electrical work and not personal authorization beyond local rules.

A cohort-rate example

A cohort has 50 starters, 40 completers, 6 continuing learners and 4 withdrawals. Completion at the stated cutoff is $40/50 = 80\%$, not $40/44 = 90.91\%$ obtained by removing continuing learners. State the cutoff and definitions; review the needs of noncompleters rather than hiding them.

An outcome-attainment example

If 36 of 40 assessed learners meet a rubric target, the aggregate indicator is 90%. That does not authorize the remaining four to graduate with an unmet mandatory outcome. They require appropriate learning, reassessment and a documented individual result.

Evidence-pack structure and final readiness

Pack	Contents
00 Authority and scope	Institution/award authority, membership, routes, programme IDs, sites/modes/languages and signed applications.
01 Self-evaluation	Requirement responses, strengths, weaknesses and exact evidence index.
02 Curriculum and outcomes	O01-O10, profile and specialty mapping; assessment tasks, rubrics and pass rules.
03 Learner evidence	Pseudonymized cohort register, complete outcomes, work samples, failures, reassessments and moderation.
04 People and resources	Staff competence, currency, workload, equipment, capacity, safety and access.
05 Delivery and protection	Safeguarding, inclusion, hosts, partners, online/AI rules, complaints and remedies.
06 Improvement and continuity	Annual review, actions, effectiveness, future needs, teach-out and records continuity.
07 Public copy	Exact proposed scope wording, credential specimens and separate permitted publicity.

Readiness questions

Can an independent reviewer trace every claimed outcome to real individual work? Can each learner access the resources needed to attain it? Are all sites and partners visible? Are adverse cases included? Can learners raise concerns safely? Is every public claim bounded to the requested scope? Address these questions before submitting a polished narrative.