

DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Handbook



The International Marine Contractors Association (IMCA) is the international trade association representing offshore, marine and underwater engineering companies.

IMCA promotes improvements in quality, health, safety, environmental and technical standards through the publication of information notes, codes of practice and other documentation.

Members are self-regulating through the adoption of IMCA guidelines as appropriate. They commit to act as responsible members by following relevant guidelines and being willing to be audited against compliance with them.

There are five core committees that relate to all members:

- ◆ Competence & Training
- ◆ Contracts & Insurance
- ◆ Health, Safety, Security & Environment
- ◆ Lifting & Rigging
- ◆ Marine Policy & Regulatory Affairs

The Association is organised through four distinct divisions, each covering a specific area of members' interests – Diving, Marine, Offshore Survey and Remote Systems & ROV.

There are also five regions which facilitate work on issues affecting members in their local geographic area – Asia-Pacific, Europe & Africa, Middle East & India, North America and South America.

IMCA M 249

Work started in early 2018, when IMCA's Marine Division Management Committee (MDMC) appointed a workgroup of DP experts from IMCA member companies to devise an accreditation scheme for DP practitioners. The IMCA DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme is the output from this cross-industry workgroup, consisting of DP vessel owners/operators, training providers, DP consultants and relevant organisations.

www.imca-int.com/marine

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DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Handbook

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I Introduction

I.1 General

The purpose of this handbook is to summarise the IMCA DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme. The scheme is the output of a cross industry workgroup consisting of DP vessel owners/operators, training providers, DP consultants and relevant organisations.

The basic aims of the scheme are:

- ◆ Improve the consistency and conduct of DP trials;
- ◆ Set a recognised level of knowledge for DP practitioners responsible for developing, witnessing and reporting of DP trials, and those responsible for the management of DP assurance processes.

The objectives for the scheme are:

- ◆ Provide assurance that DP practitioners attending vessels for trials are accredited to a recognised standard;
- ◆ Provide assurance that personnel conducting DP assurance duties in both vessel operator and client offices are accredited to a recognised standard;
- ◆ Meet the requirement of the [OCIMFs Dynamic Positioning Assurance Framework \(2016\)](#) which calls for verification that shore based DP personnel and DP assurance practitioners are qualified, experienced and competent;
- ◆ Assist DP trials practitioners and DP office based personnel to maintain and increase their knowledge base.

IMCA's DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme is open to individuals employed within IMCA member companies and non-member companies.

2 The Scheme

The DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme consists of several elements as shown in the Figure 1. Each element is described further within this section.



Figure 1 – DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Elements

2.1 Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct is a fundamental element of the scheme. It details what is expected of an accredited individual in terms of:

- ◆ Professionalism;
- ◆ Objectivity;
- ◆ Independence;
- ◆ Integrity;
- ◆ Client relations;
- ◆ Professional relations;
- ◆ Non-compliance;
- ◆ Personal conduct;
- ◆ The relationship between the code and the practitioner;
- ◆ Maintaining accreditation.

The Code of Conduct differs depending on the category of accreditation (see 2.2) and will be made available as part of any application to become accredited.

2.2 DP Practitioner Categories

The scheme has two categories of accreditation as follows:

- 1) A DP Trials and Assurance Practitioner:
 - a person actively involved in producing, witnessing and assessing the results of DP FMEA proving trials and DP annual trials programmes;
- 2) A Company DP Authority:
 - a person who manages, and provides advice on DP assurance processes and is typically employed within:
 - a DP vessel operator company
 - a DP vessel chartering company (the client).

2.3 Certification and Qualification Requirements

The scheme requires a minimum level of certification and qualification. These differ depending on the DP Practitioner category that an individual applies for. Full details of the minimum level of certification and qualifications are contained within the [DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Entry Criteria](http://www.imca-int.com/dpaccreditation), available at www.imca-int.com/dpaccreditation. Note that IMCA requires evidence of certification and qualifications, and this evidence will be verified as part of any application to the scheme.

2.4 Experience and Knowledge Requirements

In addition to certification and qualifications, the scheme requires a minimum level of experience and knowledge. Similarly, the requirements differ depending on the DP Practitioner category that an individual applies for. Full details of the minimum level of experience and knowledge requirements are contained within the [DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Entry Criteria](http://www.imca-int.com/dpaccreditation). Note that IMCA requires evidence of experience & knowledge and this evidence will be verified as part of any application to the scheme.

2.5 Initial Examinations

The scheme requires that candidates sit an examination. To be successful, candidates should have a working knowledge of the following IMCA guidance documents:

- ◆ [Guidelines for the design and operation of dynamically positioned vessels](#) (IMCA M 103)
- ◆ [A guide to DP-related documentation for DP vessels](#) (IMCA M 109)
- ◆ [The training and experience of key DP personnel](#) (IMCA M 117)
- ◆ [Specification for DP capability plots](#) (IMCA M 140)
- ◆ [Guidance for developing and conducting DP annual trials programmes](#) (IMCA M 190)
- ◆ [Guidance on operational activity planning](#) (IMCA M 220)
- ◆ [Guidance on failure modes and effects analysis \(FMEA\)](#) (IMCA M 166)
- ◆ [113 IMO Guidelines for Vessels with Dynamic Positioning Systems](#) (IMO MSC Circular 645)
- ◆ [245 IMO Guidelines for vessels and units with dynamic positioning systems](#) (MSC.1/Circ.1580)

The examination consists of 8 modules as follows:

- ◆ Module 1 – Code of Conduct
- ◆ Module 2 – IMCA Guidance Documents
- ◆ Module 3 – DP Control Systems
- ◆ Module 4 – DP Power systems
- ◆ Module 5 – Thrusters & Thruster Control Systems
- ◆ Module 6 – DP Documentation
- ◆ Module 7 – [Guidance for developing and conducting DP annual trials programmes](#) (IMCA M 190)

Module 8 differs from the other modules as it has two sets of questions depending on which category an individual is seeking to achieve:

- ◆ Module 8A – Scenario based experience (DP Trials and Assurance Practitioner)
- ◆ Module 8B – Scenario based experience (Company DP Authority)

The 8 modules are split into four sections; each section of the examination must be passed, giving a total pass mark to achieve accreditation. Failure of any section will result in an overall failure of the examination.

The format of the examination is multiple choice. Examinations are in digital format managed directly by IMCA using the Test Reach platform. Examinations can be undertaken at various locations around the globe and are invigilated to ensure integrity of the process. To further ensure examination integrity, the Test Reach platform is designed such that no two examinations are ever the same question set. To achieve this, IMCA has established an extensive pool of questions across each module that will be continuously refreshed. For further security, the system also alters the answer order for every question.

2.6 Revalidation

Once accredited, the scheme requires a process of revalidation every three years. The revalidation process requires that individuals continue to actively undertake relevant duties to ensure experience and knowledge is maintained, and continuous professional development (CPD) activities are undertaken. IMCA requires evidence of ongoing experience, knowledge and CPD, and this evidence will be verified as part of the revalidation process. Full details are contained within [DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Revalidation Criteria](#). Those not successfully completing the revalidation process will lose accreditation status.

3 Accreditation Process

3.1 Review of Minimum Requirements

Prior to applying to the accreditation scheme, applicants must satisfy themselves that they meet the requirements of qualifications, certification, experience and knowledge for their chosen category of application. In doing so, applicants will avoid the risk of a failed application and the costs associated with this. Details of evidence covering experience and knowledge are contained in [DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Evidence Requirements](#), available at www.imca-int.com/dpaccreditation.

3.2 Application

The DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Application Form is to be completed by each candidate, the category of accreditation must be clearly stated. In addition to the application form, IMCA requires evidence of the qualifications, certification, experience and knowledge to be provided. To aid this process, IMCA has created a guide detailing evidence requirement which if followed should ensure that the application process is smooth. Failure to correctly complete the application form or supply enough evidence may result in application delays or application rejection.

3.3 Payment & Application Verification

Following receipt of the application form and payment, the application is reviewed for completeness by IMCA's secretariat. Further verification of qualifications, certification, experience and knowledge is then undertaken by a technical member of the IMCA secretariat. If required, further evidence may be requested from the applicant and references may be requested and contacted. Once IMCA is satisfied that the application is complete, and the evidence is as per the requirements, the applicant will be informed, and an examination date can be scheduled. Should the applicant not supply sufficient evidence or an incomplete application, the process may be delayed, or the application rejected. The payment covers; application administration, two additional reviews of the evidence portfolio, the examination, examination centre (including invigilation) and accreditation certificate/ID card. Should a further review of the evidence portfolio be required (due to insufficient evidence being submitted or a failure to address questions raised during the initial review process), an additional fee will be charged (see Schedule 1 in the [DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme Terms and Conditions](#)).

3.4 Examination

On successful completion of the application, an examination will be scheduled taking consideration of the candidate's location and availability of locations. Examination centre locations can be found on [IMCA's website](#). The examination will be scheduled as agreed by the candidate. Candidates shall be contacted by email as soon as they are registered for an examination. The email will provide confirmation of the date, time, location of the exam, as well as login details for the examination and details on a system tutorial that must be viewed prior to the examination date.

Thereafter changes made to scheduled dates/locations by the candidate may incur additional costs. On completion of the examination, the results will be communicated directly to IMCA and the candidate will be informed by email.

Should the candidate fail the examination, the module(s) that the candidate failed will be advised along with the overall score. Should the candidate pass the examination, they are advised of their overall score. Once the candidate has achieved accredited status, they may use the phrase 'IMCA Accredited DP Trials & Assurance Practitioner' or 'IMCA Accredited Company DP Authority' on letterheading, business cards and website.

Candidates will receive a certificate and dated plastic photo ID card, which can be used to verify identity and accreditation. The date on your card will reflect the anniversary of your accreditation date.

3.5 Appeals Process

There is an appeals process covering exceptional circumstances only such as illness during the examination or interruptions such as facility power cuts that have affected the conduct of the examination. However, appeals based on overall score will not be considered. IMCA's DP Practitioners Accreditation Scheme Appeals Procedure can be made available on request. Candidates, who fail the examination will be offered the opportunity to re-sit however, the overall score achieved in the first examination will dictate how long of a re-test delay will apply. The poorer the result, the longer before being able to re-sit. Refer to the table below.

Mark in first examination (%)	Resit Permitted
≤5% lower than pass rate	Immediate subject to availability
≤10% lower than pass rate	3-months subject to availability
≤15% lower than pass rate	6-months subject to availability
≤20% lower than pass rate	12-months subject to availability

Note that candidates failing their third examination will be excluded from the accreditation process for a period of five years.

3.6 Revalidation

On successful accreditation, the candidate will be provided with details of the revalidation criteria and associated payment requirements. Payment is required annually; the payment covers the cost of administration and technical verification of revalidation evidence portfolio. For both categories of accreditation, there is a large selection of options for revalidation criteria. Revalidation checks occur every three years; however, it is imperative that evidence is collected on an ongoing basis. Should the revalidation criteria be met, then accreditation status continues, and a revised certificate/ID card issued. Should the revalidation criteria not be met then the accreditation is removed from the candidate. Re-application and examination would then be required should the candidate wish to become accredited in the future.

Further details can be found in the DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme – Revalidation Requirements.

4 Reference Documents

The following scheme documents are available from IMCAs dedicated DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme webpage.

- ◆ DP Practitioners Accreditation Scheme – Process Summary
- ◆ DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme – Terms & Conditions
- ◆ DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme – Entry Criteria
- ◆ DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme – Evidence Requirements
- ◆ DP Trials and Assurance Practitioner Code of Conduct
- ◆ Company DP Authority Code of Conduct
- ◆ DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme – Revalidation Requirements
- ◆ DP Practitioner Accreditation Scheme – Frequently Asked Questions