



AUSTRALASIAN INSTITUTE  
OF MARINE SURVEYORS

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## About our training courses

The unaccredited qualifications that AIMS offers its students comprise full courses and single subjects for CPD purposes. The full courses that we offer are:

- International Diploma of Marine Surveying (Working Boats)<sup>TM</sup>
- Industry Diploma Recreational Vessel Survey<sup>TM</sup>
- Advanced Diploma of Commercial Marine Surveying<sup>TM</sup>

Our assessors are qualified in each of the courses and single units that they assess and have significant industry experience in the marine survey sector and the maritime industry generally. AIMS focusses our services on delivering a combination of RPL and gap training. We do not currently deliver any face to face training other than CPD online webinars, state meetings, conferences or formal online tutoring sessions.

Our courses are delivered through distance learning. This combined pathway of learning and formally recognising your existing skills and knowledge is especially useful to the marine survey industry because it allows experienced maritime workers in other sectors of the industry to transition to the marine survey sector without having to re-learn things that they already know and are competent in.



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## Your key contacts

Our Professional Development and Training Coordinator, Sue Brown, can be contacted at: [training@aimsurveyors.com.au](mailto:training@aimsurveyors.com.au)

Our office hours are: 08:30am – 3.30pm Monday to Friday.

If you wish to discuss your training or make enquiries on your assessment tasks you should contact us between those hours on 0493 546 380.

If you have an urgent request outside of the trading hours, please leave a message on our voicemail and an alert will be forwarded.



## Information on the enrolment process and completing your qualification

To enrol in a course of study the first step is to download the information brochures from the training page on the [AIMS website](#) and read the requirements for the course you are interested in. If you decide to enrol in training, you should complete the [online enrolment form](#).

The time frames for completion for each course as outlined in each course brochure is based on a commitment to investing 5 hours per week on study and completing assignments. Each unit should take on average 30 hours to complete depending on the elective chosen and student experience or prior learning. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis for up to 12 months but will incur an administration fee of \$120.

Completion times for Diploma courses are:

- Industry Diploma of Recreational Vessel Survey- 12 months
- International Diploma of Marine Surveying (Working Boats) -18 months
- Advanced Diploma of Commercial Marine Surveying – 24 months

Single unit / Short Courses – students have 6 months from their enrolment date to complete a short course or single unit.

There are brochures for all courses on the AIMS website that provide comprehensive information on the core and elective subjects and any pre-requisites. If you are unable to download a brochure, contact the AIMS office and request one be emailed to you.

## Quality Statement

Although Marine Survey Courses are not offered under a national training package, when you enrol with AIMS our qualified training professionals draw on practical experience to provide you with industry relevant training.

AIMS is also an accredited Quality Assured organisation ISO9001: 2015.

The prime focus of AIMS's Quality Management System is continuous improvement that ensures members are provided with best practice in the marketing, recruitment, induction, training and assessment, and evaluation of our services and training courses.

The feedback that AIMS receives from our members and members of the public is used to improve our policies and procedures, and overall operations and in particular our assessor performance, training operations and the information we provide to you.

All RPL assessments are reviewed by assessors who are qualified to conduct the assessment. From time to time or when deemed necessary, we will have an additional person or subject matter expert be part of the assessment process. Please note that RPL outcomes are priced at the same rate as training and assessment.





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## How does RPL and gap training work?

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is essentially an assessment of the knowledge and skills you have developed throughout working career and includes on the job experience and any formal or informal training that you have undertaken.

It is an assessment of your past experiences, other qualifications and your current skills against the qualifications that we are offering.

If you have a qualification that was issued in another country it could meet some or all of the requirements for an AIMS Marine Surveyor qualification.

You may have developed skills and learned the necessary knowledge requirements of a qualification from previous employment, education (including informal courses and professional development programs) or through qualifications in a related field that may be common to Marine Surveying – such as Maritime Engineering, Naval Architecture and / or Boat Building or other Maritime qualifications for foreign going and near coastal mariners.

The RPL pathway provides you with:

- a 'skills-gap analysis' and identifies what additional learning you may need to undertake to complete the qualification.
- identification of where your current or previously issued qualifications map to marine survey qualifications.
- assessment of the alignment of your overseas qualifications to the AIMS qualifications.

When your enrolment has been successfully processed you will be required to forward to us a current CV or resume outlining your employment for the previous 5 years and any certificates or qualifications you have acquired over your working life that you feel may be counted towards the qualification.



We will map the evidence provided by you against the subject requirements for achievement to identify if you have already learned or achieved the outcomes and will then either award full or partial recognition of that subject which will determine whether you are required to undertake all of the training and assessment activities or only those that fill the identified gaps.

## How the qualifications align to AMSA accreditation and AIMS certification

The AIMS qualifications include up to date information on legislation related to marine surveying and they meet some of the requirements for AMSA accreditation and AIMS Certification.

In addition to the qualifications AMSA require appropriate experience, the ability to conduct your business in accordance with Quality Management ISO9001: 2015 system and appropriate insurance.

To achieve AIMS Certification as a Certified Commercial Marine Surveyor™ you will need to also provide evidence of meeting the requirements for Full AIMS membership, the ability to conduct your business in accordance with Quality Management ISO9001: 2015 system and appropriate insurance as well as the experience and qualifications required for each category of marine survey that you wish to be certified in.

You can access more information on AIMS certification on our website or request further information by emailing [info@aimsurveyors.com.au](mailto:info@aimsurveyors.com.au)



## Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

AIMS keeps your information private and only collects information that relates to your enrolment and application and the issue of qualifications. You may access your personal file held by AIMS at any time and may also request that updates be made to information that that you feel is incorrect or out of date.

Your training file cannot be accessed by anyone else unless you give us written permission. AIMS takes all reasonable steps to protect your personal information from misuse, loss, unauthorised access, modification or disclosure by restricting access to electronic files, secure storage of paper files and secure backup of data.

## WHS, access and equity

While the AIMS is opposed to any form of discrimination and every effort is made to ensure that diversity is valued and respected, we do reserve the right to refuse entry to students who do not meet the eligibility requirements or who have previously enrolled in the course and subsequently did not finish or submit any assignments.

AIMS also considers equity and access issues for all students. Many students undertaking marine survey qualifications are continuing to work and many work off shore on different types of vessels and under different circumstances. Many are also working in remote ports within or outside Australia and it is common for them to have periods of time where internet access and phone access is unavailable. AIMS takes into consideration a wide range of special needs that students may have and makes every effort to ensure that no student is unduly disadvantaged.

Many of our students also come from non-English speaking backgrounds and some struggle with writing and / or speaking fluently in English. Marine surveying requires advanced skills in the English language so if you believe that you require assistance, please let us know.

Although AIMS strives to make sure that all applicants are treated equally we do not currently accept enrolments from persons who have no maritime background. This is because the underpinning knowledge required to achieve the qualification can only be gained through hands on experience. Applicants must ensure that they read and understand any prerequisites required for enrolment in a particular qualification.





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## **Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)**

We provide a positive and rewarding experience for all applicants. Our enrolment form asks you to provide information regarding LLN requirements or any other special learning needs and you may be required to provide evidence of LLN levels during the skills assessment.

In the event that there is a query in regard to your language and literacy the CEO or a qualified assessor will contact you to discuss your requirements. AIMS will make every effort to ensure that you are adequately supported throughout the assessment process.

Some examples of the type of support that we can offer include:

### **Literacy**

Providing you with writing tasks that are only essential to the assessment process

- Providing examples and models of completed tasks.
- Ensuring that documents and forms are written and formatted in plain English.
- Using clear headings, highlighting certain key words or phrases.
- Providing explanations of all technical terms used.

### **Language**

- Presenting information in small chunks and speaking clearly, concisely and not too quickly. Giving clear instructions in a logical sequence.
- Encouraging you to ask questions to ensure you understand.

### **Numeracy**

- Helping you to work out what maths calculations and measurements are required to complete the task.
- Encouraging the use of calculators

## Enrolment

A comprehensive brochure outlining the process for enrolment is available on the AIMS website. If you decide to proceed to enrolment, you are required to complete an enrolment form which requests personal information and information related to your prior qualifications and employment.

In order to ensure that your personal details are kept as private as possible the enrolment form is provided to you in an online format that only you can access. Once your enrolment is completed and downloaded it is filed on our student record system which has limited access by others and is password secure.

If for any reason the AIMS is unable to complete the obligation for delivery of the agreed course(s) due to closure, or an inability to continue the course then the terms of our “Refund Policy” will apply. We will also provide you with a Statement of Attainment for the units that you have completed and will make every endeavour to assist you to gain your qualification through another training provider. Where we are unable to do this a refund will be provided for any outstanding training and or assessment services.



## Your rights and responsibilities

You have the right to:

- Be treated fairly with respect from others and without discrimination or harassment, regardless of religious, cultural, racial and sexual difference, age, disability or socio-economic status;
- Have any disputes settled in a fair and rational manner (this is accomplished by the Complaints Procedure);
- Have privacy concerning any records containing personal information, (subject to other statutory requirements and other agreed uses);
- Appeal any decision made regarding assessment; and
- Lodge a complaint and have it investigated effectively without fear of retaliation or victimisation.

It is your responsibility to ensure that:

- That you meet the pre-requisite requirements before enrolling in the course;
- That you are able to schedule appropriate study times to ensure that you will complete your qualification within the required time frame;
- Invoices are paid promptly and by the due date – if you have problems paying for fees you should contact us as soon as possible; and
- That you participate in assessments honestly and that assignments that you submit for marking are your own work and that practical tasks are verified by another surveyor.



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## Fees and refunds

Fees vary between courses and single CPD units and members of AIMS may be eligible for member discounts and reduced costs for assessment services. Course fee payments are accepted in full upfront or via a regular direct debit payment plan over 12 months. If a student elects the payment plan option, all fees must be finalised prior to the issue of their final qualification Certificate.

**Note** - We do not offer Government funding or subsidies. Alternate payment arrangements to those outlined above are assessed on a case by case scenario. Please contact [gm@aimsurveyors.com.au](mailto:gm@aimsurveyors.com.au) if you wish to discuss alternative payment plan options.

## Refunds

Refunds are only applicable if you cancel your enrolment prior to receiving any training materials. The exception to this may be if AIMS finds that you are unable to successfully complete the course due to a lack of academic ability you may be eligible for a refund and this will be determined on an individual case by case basis. Once you have received your first training units and your course has commenced, if you then change your mind a refund is not applicable.

If your regular direct debit payments are not honored at any point during the agreed period, your course enrolment will be suspended until all payments are bought up to date and regular payment recommence as agreed.

## Appeals for refund

Where an applicant seeks a refund, they should write to the CEO outlining the circumstances. Each refund request will be considered on its own merits. Decisions on refunds will always be provided to the applicant in writing.

## Other fees and charges

- AIMS does not charge interest on course fees under a payment plan.
- Credit card payments may incur a fee of up to 2.5% depending on your credit provider.
- A fee of \$40 may be applied for copies of Certificates.
- There are no additional fees for re-assessment of any unit within the qualification.



## Assessment

You will be participating in a range of written and practical assessments that assist us to confirm that you have the ability to perform a job to the required level of performance expected in the workplace.

Our assessments ensure that you have both the technical and practical skills to perform your specific job role to the required competency standards. You will always be provided with documentation explaining what assessments are required and what you need to do to achieve the standards.

Flexible assessment procedures form part of our overall assessment strategies and are integral to our training ethos. Wherever possible - but particularly in the case of workplace requirements or your unique circumstances – we will try to customise assessments to meet your specific needs.

Wherever possible your working environment will be taken into consideration and where possible you will receive support from the AIMS assessors.

## Plagiarism

All written and practical (photos, declarations by others etc) assessment assignments require you to complete and submit a declaration stating that all evidence submitted is your own evidence and not that of another individual or organisation. This requirement is in the form of a declaration that is attached to your assessment sheet. You must complete the declaration when asked.

## Marking of assessments

When your assessments are forwarded to us they are filed against your student records and scheduled for marking. Please allow 10–12 working days to receive your results back.

## Our Assessors

The role of an assessor is to objectively assess and judge your evidence against a set of standards. At AIMS we ensure that all assessors are provided with ongoing professional development and that they are supported and informed on contemporary assessment practices and the Marine Surveyor industry standards.

An assessor must:

- Interpret and understand the skills and knowledge;
- requirements for each standard as well as the employability skills required for a particular qualification.
- Ensure that your evidence meets the standards; and
- Use industry expertise to make fair and objective judgements.

Assessment should not be stressful. At AIMS we ensure that you are supported and encouraged to excel. It is in your long-term interests to ensure that you can provide as much evidence as possible to demonstrate that you meet the requirements of a qualification.

AIMS wants to make sure that you succeed in gaining your marine surveyor qualification. To that end we will provide you every opportunity to gather quality evidence of your ability to meet the standards. The assessor will support you through the process and provide examples of the types of evidence you can submit.



## Appealing an assessment

You will be participating in a range of written assessments. In rare instances, it is possible that you may wish to challenge an assessment outcome. If this is the case, then please refer to our Complaints and Appeals process listed below.

Note - You have the right to represent yourself at all forums where the issue is being discussed and you will have the matter heard within ten working days. The outcomes of all appeals and the reasons for any decisions made will be given to you in writing.

### Complaints and Appeals Policy

The AIMS commits to ensure that all complaints and appeals are dealt in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness and is publicly available via our code of conduct/code of professional practice. Learners may choose to submit a complaint to us via the Informal Process or Formal Process.

#### Informal process

Learners may submit a complaint (verbally or in writing) directly to the CEO with the purpose to resolve a complaint through discussion and through mutual agreement.

#### Formal Process

When a Learner wishes to submit a formal complaint or is dissatisfied with the attempt to resolve a complaint informally (directly with staff) the Learner may submit a formal complaint to the CEO utilising the 'AIMS Grievance and Complaint Form' on the AIMS website.

The CEO will respond in writing to all formal Learner complaints within 5 days of receipt of a Complaint Form. When a Complaint is recognised as requiring more than 60 calendar days to resolve the we will inform the complainant in writing, including reasons why more than 60 calendar days are required; and regularly update the complainant on the progress of the matter.

The CEO's response to the complainant shall include information and procedures concerning the complainant's right to appeal the proposed solution and request for an independent adjudicator.

#### Appeals Process

In the event of a Learner advising that they are dissatisfied with the proposed solution for a formal complaint the CEO shall provide an additional opportunity to provide a solution and shall apply the External Appeal process.

#### External Appeals

The CEO shall advise the Learner that an Independent Third party shall be sought to consider the nature of the complaint and a possible further resolution at no cost to the Learner.

#### Assessment result appeals

All appeals from Learners relating to assessment results must be received in a period no longer than 3 months following the competency decision.



## Certificates

Once all of your results, assessments and documentation have been checked and confirmed, and all fees are paid we will forward your certificate to you.

Certification will be a Certificate for a full qualification or a Statement of Attainment for single units / subjects that you have been assessed as having achieved.

Your certification will include the date your certificate was issued and the date your assessment was completed.

A transcript of all units achieved will be attached to your Certificate or included on the Statement of Attainment.

Certificates will be issued within 14 working days of completion of a qualification or short course.

## Feedback/Evaluation

AIMS actively seeks your feedback and regularly undertakes evaluations of all assessments as part of our ongoing continuous improvement system.

We welcome students to provide feedback both during and after your course completion to [training@aimsurveyors.com.au](mailto:training@aimsurveyors.com.au).

All feedback is documented to ensure appropriate follow up action is taken.



## Re-issuing qualifications

AIMS keeps records of your assessment and enrolment details for 7 years. If in the future you need another copy of your certificate you can request a copy by writing to the AIMS at [training@aimsurveyors.com.au](mailto:training@aimsurveyors.com.au).

Your request must outline:

- (a) Your name;
- (b) Your current address and your address at the time of the course;
- (c) Details of the course you completed (e.g. Diploma in Marine Surveying);
- (d) When the course started and finished; and
- (e) Any other details you can give to identify yourself.

Please note there may be an administrative cost for the reissuing of any Certificates or Statements of Attainment of \$40 per certificate/statement

# Acknowledgement Declaration

Please complete the following declaration and forward to [training@aimsurveyors.com.au](mailto:training@aimsurveyors.com.au) with your resume and copies of your qualifications.

I have received, read and understand the contents of this Student Handbook which outlines the conditions and my rights and responsibilities as an applicant with AIMS for training and skills assessment for marine surveyor qualifications.

In particular I acknowledge that:

- I have read and understood the fees and refunds information.
- I have read and understood my rights and responsibilities.
- I have read and understood the information on completing my study within the required time frames and believe that I can achieve this.
- I have read and understood the information on the pre-requisites for my course and can confirm that I meet the requirements and have access to a vessel to complete my practical assessment tasks.
- Please note that, whilst engaging in your studies, you are not permitted to use your Student Associate membership for the purposes of promoting your business.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

