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PRESS INFORMATION

International Institute of Marine Surveying launches new Professional Qualifications

Recently the IIMS was notified by Pearson Edexcel, the external awarding body of the current IIMS HNC and HND in marine surveying qualifications, that they intended to stop supporting specialist, customised course providers such as ours. We were not alone in receiving this startling news, taken by Pearson for reasons known only to them. The final intake for students wishing to gain an HNC/HND is mid October. The scheme will then close for new student registrations, but will remain open for those already registered to complete their studies by 31 October 2018.

On receiving the news, the IIMS education committee met a couple of times to consider the best way forward and quickly came to a consensus. A proposal was submitted to the Board and duly approved. The result is a positive outcome and provides an excellent and proactive way forward.

Essentially the study units, which are current and recognised to be of the highest standard in the industry, will continue to be used with a few tweaks made where necessary for the new programme. Equivalent to a level 4/5 education qualification, IIMS is launching two new professional qualifications, the only professional body of its kind to offer and award such qualifications in marine surveying. The first is the *Professional Qualification in Yacht & Small Craft Marine Surveying*; and the second is the *Professional Qualification in Commercial Ship Marine Surveying*. There will be an option for students to upgrade either professional qualification to an *Advanced Professional* level too. By splitting the course in two, it means IIMS can focus separately on both extremes of the surveying industry. The course will continue to be administered on a distance learning basis. There is no examination to sit, but there is an assignment to be completed for each unit that is then marked and assessed. There are 14 units for yacht and small craft surveyors available to study and 27 units for commercial ship surveyors.

Here's how the qualification works. To achieve either professional qualification, students will be required to pass the four core units, plus four additional specialist units of their choice and there is two years study time in which to complete the work. Units can be taken in any order. To upgrade to an *Advanced Professional Qualification*, it is necessary to pass a further four specialist units of your choice and a further one year study time is granted.

Capt John Noble, Chairman of the IIMS education committee said about the enforced changes, "I thank the committee for their hard work and diligence. The committee came to a unanimous decision and the result is a positive outcome. The new programme and course structure looks exciting."

Mike Schwarz, IIMS CEO said, "These are exciting times for the IIMS education programme and being able to launch two new, separate professional qualifications is a progressive step for members and the marine surveying profession as a whole. I look forward to IIMS remaining at the forefront of educating the next generation of surveyors." He added, "And there is one other benefit of this new arrangement – we have been able to lower the price too without diminishing the quality of the content!"

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