



EU UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS COURSE (EUUOC)

SYLLABUS & CURRICULUM

Head of Training & Directing Staff
Institute for European Intelligence & Security
Training & Directing Staff
Vienna
AUSTRIA

CONTACT DETAILS: The head of training and directing staff can be reached over the intelligence network at H/TDS, by e-mail at h.tds@ieis.eu with further details being disseminated over the public website at www.ieis.eu. Candidates are reminded not to send sensitive information by e-mail.

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EU UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS COURSE (EUUOC)

1. This document outlines the core content and scope of training offered by the Institute for European Intelligence and Security on the aforementioned course, together with any other relevant information not included elsewhere.

Aim

2. This handbook aims to provide the following types of information:
 - a. Specific Institute education and training doctrine relating to the course.
 - b. Training and readiness exercises associated with the course.
 - c. Supplementary and optional training offered as a part of the course.
 - d. Any other pertinent information not presented elsewhere.

Glossary

3. The list that follows is an exhaustive list of abbreviations used throughout this document:

IEIS	Institute for European Intelligence & Security
EU	European Union
EUIOC	EU Intelligence Operations Course
EUIAC	EU Intelligence Analysis Course
EUIMC	EU Intelligence Management Course
EUUOC	EU Undercover Operations Course
ECIM	European Criminal Intelligence Model
ICF	Integrated Competency Framework
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
CULEX	Culminating Exercise
MCPE	Multiple Choice Practical Examination
FTX	Field Training Exercise
SV/SCM	Surveillance/Surveillance Countermeasures
OSINT	Open Source Intelligence
TSCM	Technical Surveillance Countermeasures

Introduction

4. Welcome to the EUUOC. The course provides candidates with the skills and knowledge required to perform undercover operations within an international intelligence environment over an intensive residential programme coupled with preparatory e-learning. The entire development experience is focused on infiltrating hostile organisations presenting a current threat to European security.
5. The course adopts small teaching groups to personalise the learning experience. The self-directed learning approach with evaluation and development through experiential learning places a heavy burden on participants. The course is goal-oriented in line with contemporary adult-learning principles and develops useful, applicable and fundamental operational skills in an intensive but respectful environment.
6. Throughout the course participants will be required to complete individual and group assignments, working effectively in isolation and learning to leverage the knowledge and resources of an entire team to engage complex scenarios.

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7. The directing staff set the conditions for learning, provide a safe environment, deliver rich content and facilitate learning by discovery, all whilst ensuring secrecy and security measures are adhered to.
8. It is the desired outcome of the programme for graduates to positively impact their organisations and the world at large through the application of new and enhanced individual and collective capabilities. Their skills and knowledge should serve them in developing understanding and supporting operations planning to ensure the security of Europe and its interests across the globe.
9. **Admissions.** The course applies additional pre-requisite criteria beyond that required for admission to Institute courses in general. Candidates are reminded that those who have not studied with the Intelligence Academy before must complete the *Intelligence Foundations* selection and induction course. Also, candidates using the Institute to obtain a security clearance for the first time must also complete the *Intelligence Security* awareness course. Candidates who have already successfully completed either of these online will not be asked to re-take them.
10. Candidates must also have existing training and professional experience in:
 - *Intelligence operations* equivalent to participation in the Institute's EUIOC or similar programmes; or
 - *Intelligence analysis* equivalent to participation in the Institute's EUAC or similar programmes; or
 - *Intelligence command* equivalent to participation in the Institute's EUIMC or similar programmes.
11. **Security Vetting.** The course has a number of additional enhanced security requirements, amongst which is that all candidates fulfil the minimum requirements for a RESTRICTED level security clearance or higher. The Institute can initiate the vetting process for candidates who lack a recognised clearance or the means to acquire one. However, such vetting can take up to 6 months to complete and has resulted in additional expenses in some cases.

Academic Profile

12. The course was originally authored by the course director (see below) as a product of an IEIS consortium research project conducted in 2015 into contemporary covert capability modelling throughout Europe.
13. **Course Director.** [Redacted 20190808 for UNCLASSIFIED digital release
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14. **Professional Mentor.** [Redacted 20190808 for UNCLASSIFIED digital release
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15. **Office Hours.** On-duty hours are considered to be 0900-1700. Staff can be contacted out of hours by e-mail or approached after lectures, seminars and workshops.

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Course Description

16. The course enables officials to perform covert operations within an intelligence environment consistent with the vocational competencies required by the intelligence profession throughout Europe. The programme combines residential and independent study modes in a single blended learning approach.
17. Selection, foundation and advanced undercover courses are combined as prescribed by international and regional curriculum, enabling candidates to function as efficient and effective undercover officers.
18. Learning is focused on how to establish and utilise a covert infrastructure, plan and prepare covert infiltration, participate in and deploy undercover operations against covert targets and sustain operations over time. The course draws particular focus to regional and international law, ethical standards, health, safety and security.
19. **Selection Requirement.** The course requires attendance at a selection weekend directly prior to attending the residential course. In addition to profiling and assessing candidates, selection also identifies candidates whose behaviour or competency after distance-learning may represent a danger to themselves or others. Therefore, all attendees are required to pass selection prior to advancing to the rest of the residential programme. The weekend also provides successful candidates with a profile and development plan for them to work on throughout the remainder of the course. Subject to increases in fees, associated expenses and availability, candidates failing the selection course may return in subsequent years to make the attempt again until they pass.
20. **Dress Code.** Casual attire consistent with the operational environment is the usual dress code for undercover officers. Dress on the course would be expected to be consistent.

Learning Objectives

21. The course is designed to produce undercover officers who can:
22. **LO 01: Employ ECIM Concepts.** An understanding of the European Criminal Intelligence Model (ECIM) and undercover law and ethics is required of all covert operatives in order to adequately prepare appropriate authorisations and documentation to the required standard.
23. **LO 02: Demonstrate Covert Awareness.** Self-motivation, problem-solving, interpersonal and communication skills should all be improved through training. An understanding of the limitations of informants, surveillance, electronic interception and other covert techniques gained, together with the ability to apply historical cases of undercover work and agent operations to address social problems.
24. **LO 03: Conduct Operations Planning.** An appreciation of the security and confidentiality implications of undercover work is essential in planning short and long-term undercover operations.
25. **LO 04: Deliver Tactical Operations.** Undercover operatives must be capable of penetrating target groups and identifying unknown subjects of interest and their activities in order to deter, disrupt and neutralise targets and operations where traditional methods have proven inefficient or unsuccessful. They must provide intelligence and evidential support for tactical operations and current, actionable and sustainable intelligence and evidence on targets and their activities.

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26. **LO 05: Provide Covert Support.** Covert operatives must be able to develop deep cover with covert infrastructure support, conduct technical and physical surveillance countermeasures and assess their own personal strengths, weaknesses and characteristics with regards to undercover deployment and prepare basic cover accordingly.
27. **LO 06: Manage Operative Welfare.** Regular briefings and debriefings are required of undercover operatives, during which health, safety, welfare, financial and managerial issues impacting the deployment must be assessed.

Course Structure

28. The course is delivered in four main phases; selection, skill development, consolidation and assessment. Initially candidate's strengths are assessed in a selection weekend and they are sorted into groups accordingly. Lectures, workshops and independent study aims to develop skills and knowledge, during which a variety of delivery methods are used to engage the participants from different perspectives. This learning is then consolidated and applied with exercises. Finally, the examination assesses individual knowledge retained by candidates.
29. The course is delivered flexibly by employing workshops and exercises as well as traditional lectures alongside e-learning. Communal activities are encouraged to develop team cohesion and networking opportunities with support from the Institute's offices in Vienna. Coaching and mentoring forms an integral part of course delivery with career advice in the security sector available from recognised experts, assistance with course content and sustained aftercare after the course ends.
30. **Preparatory Distance-Learning.** This element develops the fundamental theory behind undercover operations with the exception of sensitive material delivered through virtual events over a separate secure platform. The e-learning element includes lectures on ECIM concepts, ethics and law, authorities and documentation, intelligence and evidence collection, intelligence foundations and history, covert operations history and failure, briefing and debriefing, deployment planning and preparation. Candidates will not be admitted to the selection weekend without having achieved a passing grade on the preparatory element.
31. The following online events are scheduled for delivery prior to the residential course. Each session is approximately 90mins in duration. These lectures mainly focus on surveillance tradecraft, special and covert operations.
- Induction, Informants & Surveillance.
 - Interception & Covert Techniques.
 - Health, Safety & Welfare.
 - Deterrence and Disruption.
 - Influence & Deception Operations.
 - Covert Action.
 - Foot Surveillance.
 - Mobile & Progressive Surveillance.
 - Technical Surveillance & TSCM.
 - Undercover Surveillance & Reconnaissance.
 - Undercover Tactics.
 - Covert Support Structures.
 - Undercover Support to Operations.
 - Confidentiality & Security.
 - Undercover Selection.
 - Infiltration Tactics & Methodology.
 - Snap to Deep Cover.
 - Legend Development.
 - Bona Fides.
 - Covert Finance.
 - Legal Instruments.
 - Big Data, Cyber & OSINT.
 - Anti- & Counter-Surveillance.
 - Technical Operations & SCM.
 - Sabotage & Subversion (Optional)
 - Covert Communications (Optional)
 - Counter-Piracy (Optional)

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32. At the discretion of the directing staff, some or all of these lectures may be delivered during or before the residential component as “break away” training. Such training will always be by hybrid delivery to ensure the same offering to all participants.
33. **Selection & Training.** The residential part of the course begins on the third Monday in August each year with the selection weekend beginning on the preceding Saturday. The course runs for 7 consecutive days over 1 week. Typical hours are 0900 - 1700, although participants often work extended hours in order to complete assessments and exercises. Residential school places are subject to availability and a minimum representation but further details will be provided in sufficient time for candidates to make arrangements for attendance.
34. On the first day of attendance, participants will be enrolled onto the residential component and provided with a security briefing. They will be introduced to the selection exercise Ex. TENDERFOOT and the criteria for completion and entering the course on the third day. Those who fail selection may not proceed to the remainder of the course. However, all candidates are issued with a development plan which they can work on over the course, or before they return in subsequent years (if they are dismissed).

Saturday (Day 1)	0900 - 0930	Induction & Registration	Field Area
	0930 - 1030	Security & Exercise Briefing	Field Area
	1030 - 1100	Break	Cafeteria
	1100 - 1130	Group / Role Assignments	Field Area
	1130 - 1230	Planning & Preparation	Field Area
	1230 - 1330	Lunch / Travel ¹	Transport / Field Area
	1330+	Ex. TENDERFOOT ²	Field Area
Sunday (Day 2)	0000 - 1030	Ex. TENDERFOOT ²	Field Area
	1030 - 1100	Break / Travel ¹	Transport
	1100 - 1230	Exercise De-brief	Field Area
	1230 - 1330	Lunch	Mess Hall / Dining Area
	1330 - 1500	Feedback & Consultation	Field Area
	1500 - 1530	Break	Cafeteria
	1530 - 1700	Final & Close	Field Area

35. Those passing selection will begin training on the Monday (day 3) with an induction into the remainder of the course, followed by lectures and practical exercises on bypass techniques, weapons, equipment and surveillance detection. Tuesday continues weapons, equipment, and surveillance detection training with additional support through medical drill and agent training. Ex. THUNDERBOLT takes place between Wednesday and Friday, ending with a period of reflection on the capability assessment.
36. **Ex. THUNDERBOLT.** The final exercise and capability assessment is a FTX. This CULEX begins on the fifth day of the EUUOC and runs for 3 consecutive days, concluding on the following Friday. As a live exercise there are no limitations on hours and often participants work extended hours. Delegates from the EUUOC may only participate in the exercise in the role of *undercover officers*.
37. On the first Wednesday morning, participants will be provided with an introductory briefing and exercise induction, be assigned roles and begin their planning and preparation for the exercise. In the conduct of a special operation, exercise candidates will be required to

¹ Travel to and from field areas will be arranged by the directing staff and all delegates will be returned from the field area under escort.

² During the exercise stand-easy and sustenance will be at the participant's discretion. The exercise will unfold in real time, regardless of participation.

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persistently infiltrate and undermine the efforts of a sophisticated covert intelligence adversary. The exercise will conclude with a commanders briefing and a period of reflection, feedback and consultation to consolidate learning.

Monday (Day 3)	0900 - 0930	Induction & Registration	Conference Room
	0930 - 1030	Physical Bypass	Conference Room
	1030 - 1100	Break	Cafeteria
	1100 - 1230	Electronic Bypass	Conference Room
	1230 - 1330	Lunch	Mess Hall / Dining Area
	1330 - 1530	Weapon Acquisition & Maint.	Conference Room
	1500 - 1530	Break / Travel ¹	Transport
	1530+	Permissive SV/SCM Drill	Field Area
Tuesday	0900 - 1030	Weapon/Equip. Familiarisation	Conference Room
	1030 - 1100	Break / Travel ¹	Transport
	1100 - 1230	Blast & Ballistic Drill	Field Area
	1230 - 1330	Lunch / Travel ¹	Transport / Field Area
	1330 - 1530	Agent SV/SCM Training	Conference Room
	1530 - 1600	Break / Travel ¹	Transport
	1600+	Non-Permissive SV/SCM Drill	Field Area
Wednesday	0900 - 1000	Exercise Briefing	Conference Room
	1000 - 1030	Group / Role Assignments	Conference Room
	1030 - 1100	Break	Cafeteria
	1100 - 1230	Planning & Preparation	Conference Room
	1230 - 1330	Lunch	Mess Hall / Dining Area
	1330+	Ex. THUNDERBOLT ²	Field Area
Thursday	0000 - 2359	Ex. THUNDERBOLT ²	Field Area
Friday (Day 7)	0000 - 1030	Ex. THUNDERBOLT ²	Field Area
	1030 - 1100	Break	Cafeteria
	1100 - 1230	Exercise De-briefing	Conference Room
	1230 - 1330	Lunch	Mess Hall / Dining Area
	1330 - 1500	Feedback & Consultation	Conference Room
	1500 - 1530	Break	Cafeteria
	1530 - 1700	Final & Close	Conference Room

38. The course adopts approximately a 2:1 theory to practice ratio in favour of theory. However, the Institute utilises immersive scenario-based learning techniques requiring participants to solve realistic problems by leveraging the skills developed throughout the programme.
39. Throughout exercise scenarios, candidates will be expected to act in the role of undercover officers within intelligence organisations. Efforts have been made to distribute an even allocation of time to all competencies measured within exercises.

Assessment

40. Periodically, throughout the course, participants will be asked to complete individual and group assignments. Participants will be expected to assess complex situations and problem sets, infiltrate and sabotage target organisations from within and counter contemporary threats to European security.
41. All assessments are designed to measure vocational competency according to the ICF for operations - Undercover Officer (domain 4). Learning objectives are also tied to the same competency-based model.

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42. The ICF is derived from meta-studies the Institute conducts into the intelligence profession at a European and vocational level. The professional standards and guidelines communicated in course content are also derived from the same research.
43. Assessment may be by any valid and accredited competency assessment meeting course requirements. However, competency is most commonly evidenced with a passing grade in the following assessments:
- A *portfolio* of practical work delivered remotely via the e-learning platform.
 - Mentor (approved assessor) *reviews* conducted throughout the residential school, demonstrating the application of theory in practice across the relevant domain of the competency framework.
 - A score of greater than 49% on the relevant section of the *MCPE* or an equivalently balanced examination of similar content.
44. **Professional Practice.** The assessment of professional practice by professional mentors is evidence-based and conducted using direct observation throughout the residential programme. The professional mentor is required to log observations evidencing participant competency across the ICF. Mentors are required to actively engage with participants (assigning additional tasks where required) in order to observe competency in instances where it has not been observed passively. Throughout the residential course professional practice is planned by the professional mentor and integrated into the course framework, therefore participants are limited in their freedom to plan their own professional practice.

Awards

45. After passing the required assessments and accruing 17 credits at approximately 170 guided learning hours participants become eligible for the EQF Level 3 Certificate in EU Undercover Operations.

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IEIS Vienna
Directing Staff

[REDACTED]
Vienna
AUSTRIA

IEIS Network: H/TDS

Mobile: [REDACTED]
E-Mail: h.tds@ieis.eu

HQ IEIS
H TDS

Our reference: IEIS/0311/20231030/3

Copy to - see Annex B

30 October 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

EX. THUNDERBOLT, VIENNA / DUBLIN

1. As you are aware you will be participating in Ex. THUNDERBOLT in Vienna or Dublin after attending a selection course on the preceding weekend. You will be joining a select group of professionals from throughout Europe in a highly demanding programme spanning a week. Training will be demanding and will test you both physically and mentally. However, it is important that you attend throughout the exercise and all accompanying training which may begin early and extend late into the night.
2. You are required to make your own accommodation and dining arrangements. However, the venue is central, located near to many dining facilities. You will only be permitted to make telephone calls home outside of designated lecture and exercise times. You will be treated as professionals and as such the highest standards of behaviour will be expected of you in return. Those who fail to comply with security policy, academic or professional codes of conduct risk disqualification.
3. You will require the following equipment for training and exercises:
 - a. Funds for recreation and stand easy.
 - b. Formal but comfortable clothing.
 - c. Outdoor weatherproof clothing and rucksack.
 - d. Pens, pencils and erasers.
4. If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above number.

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted 20231030 for UNCLASSIFIED digital release

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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION GUIDANCE

1. Thank you for registering for Ex. THUNDERBOLT. Below you will find important information you will need in order to get the most out of your exercise. The exercise is a capability assessment with an accompanying vocational training course planned for one week in August.
2. **Training Rules.** Attendees will be expected to adopt “operating cover” whilst on the course, meaning that deception and misdirection will be a constant theme throughout the programme. However, unsanctioned deception could be disruptive and therefore grounds for dismissal from the course. As it is often difficult to manage this dichotomy in intelligence training, remember that the following regulations govern all activity during the programme:
 - a. Real-world actions take priority over cover or simulated actions.
 - b. Participants will comply with all known intelligence and security procedures unless otherwise directed by the directing staff.
 - c. The use of covert tactics must be authorised by a member of the directing staff to be considered legitimate.
 - d. The independent and unsupervised “practice” of covert tactics by candidates is strictly forbidden and grounds for instant dismissal from the programme.
 - e. Participants are expected to act in a professional manner at all times.

Joining Instructions

3. All participants should follow certain guidelines before, during and after the programme in order to ensure a safe and effective practicing environment.
4. **Before the exercise.** If you gain any knowledge of the assessment material before the exercise, notify the directing staff so that appropriate actions can be taken. Prior to enrolment candidates may also be required to complete additional paperwork, including signing non-disclosure agreements, hazardous environment waivers and security contracts.
5. **During the exercise.** All participants should observe the following directions:
 - a. Not all required information will be provided by the directing staff. You will be expected to gather information through existing open and closed sources.
 - b. Do not engage in personal conversations with the support staff, observers or media personnel unless permitted to do so. If you are asked a question, give a short, concise answer. If you are busy and cannot immediately respond, indicate that, but report back with an answer as soon as possible.
 - c. If you do not understand the scope of any task or if you are uncertain about an aspect of your or another’s participation, ask the directing staff.
 - d. Parts of a scenario during exercises and assessments may seem implausible. Recognise that simulations have objectives to satisfy and may require the incorporation of unrealistic aspects. Every effort has been made to balance realism with safety and to create an effective learning environment.
 - e. Participants and directing staff may halt an activity at any point by saying aloud “Stop. Stop. All stop!” It is the responsibility of all concerned to halt any activity if they believe a safety issue exists.
 - f. Unless otherwise stated, it is not required to announce what you are doing while undertaking actions or to maintain a log of activities as you conduct them.
 - g. Be aware of your surroundings and others close to you, there is an inherent risk in security training and you have a duty of care to yourself, your colleagues and the public.
 - h. Unless otherwise stated, follow directing staff directions precisely and without hesitation, they are there for your welfare and safety.

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6. **After the exercise.** Destroy any notes or materials generated. If you wish to retain materials for future reference you must ask permission from the directing staff. Under no circumstances is it permissible to reproduce or disseminate materials further.
7. Should you find you have any misplaced belongings, please contact [REDACTED] (h.tds@ieis.eu). The director will attempt to trace lost property as soon as possible. If your item has been found, the Institute will arrange for its return.
8. **Simulations.** Because simulations are of limited duration and scope, certain details will be artificial. The physical description of what would fully occur at a site or in a surrounding area may be relayed to participants during an exercise or assessment. The directing staff may also simulate the roles and interactions of other organisations or individuals. Unless otherwise directed, participants should respond to all exercise events as if they were real and in accordance with specific guidance provided prior to the simulation.
9. **Optional events.** On the last Friday evening of the exercise, those who have elected to undertake Optional Training Assessments (OTA) may be given the opportunity to attend an evening lecture and complete any necessary night exercises.
10. There are no other events planned during the programme. However, if this changes, plans will be announced during the course.
11. **Requirements.** As security requirements are higher for clandestine courses, it is usual for candidates to be asked to identify themselves and present evidence that they meet the criteria for attendance before being permitted to proceed to the residential phase. Candidates who cannot present such evidence may be asked to leave and attend a later iteration when they have the necessary documentation. Therefore, it is strongly advised that candidates bring the following to enrolment if they have not already been asked to present it:
 - Their highest educational qualification.
 - A basic intelligence training certificate.
 - Passport or other identity document.
 - Proof of European citizenship, residency or professional affiliation.
 - Security clearance certificate, advanced background check or equivalent.
 - A full curriculum vitae with supporting character, academic and professional references.
 - If not a native/fluent English speaker, a recent qualification demonstrating an IELTS of 7.5 or equivalent.
12. There are no additional pre-requisites to training beyond that mentioned in this and the accompanying texts. All other supplies will be provided or requested of participants with sufficient notice and at negligible cost. However, candidates who are unsure of what they should bring should clarify their case with the directing staff prior to attendance.
13. **Updates.** For further updates on exercise material, consult the following documentation:
 - Intelligence Academy, *Ex. THUNDERBOLT Player Handbook* (Vienna: IEIS, 2024).
 - IEIS, *Candidate Handbook* (Vienna: IEIS, 2015).
 - IEIS, Institute for European Intelligence and Security (IEIS), <https://academy.ieis.eu/>.
14. **Electronic and physical certification.** After the exercise has concluded, verification of attendance will be uploaded to their record, allowing them to sit the final exam. Graduating candidates will be provided with electronic verification of their qualifications and a physical certificate.
15. **Registration and Sessions.** The residential course will begin at 0900 in the conference room. If you arrive once registration has closed, please contact the directing staff. Plenary and break-out sessions will take place in communal areas. Candidates will be briefed on field areas prior to use, when not in use field areas are strictly out-of-bounds. Coffee breaks and lunch will be served in the cafeteria or at a venue of the candidate's choosing.

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16. **Contact Numbers.** The directing staff may be contacted at [REDACTED]. However, during your exercise, the following telephone numbers may also be helpful:

Vienna

Emergency (Police)	133
Emergency (Fire)	122
Emergency (Ambulance)	144
European Emergency Number	112

Dublin

Emergency (All)	999
Non-Emergency (All)	112

17. **Aftercare.** As with all quality products and services, support does not end after the service is delivered. After your course has concluded you can expect continued support in several ways including but not limited to:

- **Professional references:** Training courses contain a significant element of vocational practice. As such trainers feel confident in professionally recommending trainees to potential employers or other third parties. References are available upon request.
- **Updated certification:** As courses evolve and are updated, your training will not become defunct. As a graduate of an approved course your digital and (at your request) your physical certification will be updated over time.
- **On-going support:** For a short period after training concludes trainees will receive professional support through career advice and coaching. However, all trainees will remain a part of the IEIS network and receive regular updates and benefits for professional developmental.