
Unitisation Course for Joint Developments: Unit Agreements, Tract Shares and Expert Process

23 – 27 November 2026
Casablanca





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Programme Summary

Unitisation for joint developments is the subject of this one-week training course for commercial, legal, reservoir and asset managers, ending in a unit negotiation file for one shared reservoir. A reservoir that crosses a licence line cannot be developed well by two parties acting alone, yet agreement on shares is hard to reach without a common evidence base. The programme builds a method for testing the case for a unit, converting reservoir evidence into tract shares, setting agreement terms and handling revision and disputes. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on unitisation to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Shared reservoirs left without a unit risk uneven drainage, duplicated wells and long disputes between neighbours. Where a unit exists but its shares rest on thin data, later revision becomes a source of conflict rather than a routine step. Teams that agree evidence rules and revision triggers at the start protect recovery and keep partners and authorities focused on development instead of disagreement.

- Negotiation Cycle Time: Falls as data exchange rules and share methods are agreed early.
- Dispute Exposure: Falls as revision triggers and expert routes are written into the agreements.
- Recovery Value: Is protected as one development plan replaces competing plans.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Volumetric Estimation: This reservoir engineering method sets the in-place volumes used in Session 2.
- Material Balance: It tests whether production history supports those volumes and shapes the evidence review in Session 2.
- Expected Value Analysis: It frames how uncertainty in shares is weighed in Session 4.
- Unit Operating Agreement Principles: The terms parties sign in practice govern the work of Sessions 3 and 4.

Intended Participants

- Commercial managers who negotiate shares and terms with neighbouring licence holders.
- Legal advisers who draft and interpret unit and operating agreements.
- Reservoir managers who supply the volumes and models behind each share.
- Asset managers who must keep production running while shares are revised.
- Government officers who approve unit plans and oversee disputes.

Typical sectors include upstream operators, state energy bodies, petroleum authorities and joint venture partners.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate whether a shared reservoir justifies a unit.
2. Participants will be able to construct tract participation figures from in-place volume estimates.
3. Participants will be able to assess reservoir evidence and its uncertainty range for each party.
4. Participants will be able to justify unit agreement and operating terms to partners and authorities.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise redetermination triggers and the evidence each requires.
6. Participants will be able to diagnose points of dispute and select a suitable expert route.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Shared Reservoirs and the Case for Unitisation

When does a reservoir that crosses a licence line need a unit?

- Shared Reservoir Screening Test
- Pooled Development Case
- Unit Formation Roadmap
- Data Exchange Protocol
- Unit Area Boundary Map

Day 2: Reservoir Evidence and Tract Shares

How are in-place volumes turned into each party's share?

- In-Place Volume Estimate
- Material Balance Check
- Reservoir Model Review
- Tract Participation Calculation
- Uncertainty Range Table

Day 3: Unit Agreements and Operating Terms

Which terms keep a unit workable over many years?

- Unit Agreement Term Sheet
- Unit Operating Agreement Map
- Operator Appointment Criteria
- Cost and Production Allocation Rules
- Entitlement Balancing Method

Day 4: Redetermination and Disputes

How are shares revised when new data arrives, and who decides?



- Redetermination Trigger List
- Equity Revision Workbook
- Expected Value Comparison
- Expert Determination Brief
- Dispute Escalation Ladder

Day 5: Applying the Tools to One Shared Reservoir

Do the screening, share, agreement and revision tools support one negotiation file?

- Applying the Session 1 Data Exchange Protocol
- Using the Session 2 Tract Participation Calculation
- Testing the Session 3 Unit Agreement Term Sheet
- Checking the Session 4 Redetermination Trigger List
- Completing the Unit Negotiation File

Methodology

The programme uses a case analysis method built on anonymised reservoir summaries, draft agreement clauses, production histories and revision correspondence from upstream partnerships and state-led developments. Participants work in mixed commercial, legal and technical teams on a shared case, challenge each other's share calculations and receive written facilitator feedback on every exercise set.

- Suggested activity: Calculating tract shares from two competing volume estimates.
- Suggested activity: Marking up a draft unit operating agreement for unclear terms.
- Suggested activity: Preparing a brief for an expert asked to settle a share dispute.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a unit negotiation file for one shared reservoir. It holds a screening note, a data exchange protocol, tract share calculations with an uncertainty range, an agreement term sheet and a redetermination plan. The file is used at work to brief the negotiating team, open talks with neighbouring licence holders and prepare submissions to the authority.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is unitisation suitable for managers without a reservoir engineering background?

Yes. Unitisation is taught through sample volume tables and clause extracts, so commercial and legal managers need no engineering training, only familiarity with licence-based upstream work.



Which methods does unitisation draw on?

Unitisation draws on volumetric estimation, material balance, expected value analysis and the principles found in unit operating agreements.

How is the file from unitisation used at work?

You use the unit negotiation file to brief your team, open talks with neighbouring licence holders and prepare submissions to the authority.

How does unitisation differ from a joint operating agreement programme?

Unitisation covers how a shared reservoir is pooled and how shares are set and revised, while a joint operating agreement programme covers the working relationship between partners in one licence.