



**Are you applying to HETAC for Provider Registration and seeking accreditation for your first programme(s) within that process?**

HETAC is delighted that the innovation and development of the sector is being expressed in the number and variety of applications for Provider Registration and associated programme accreditation.

We recognise that it is often important for programmes to come into the marketplace as early as possible after the need is identified. We try to respond to accreditation requests in as timely a manner as possible consistent with the rigorous process required under the Act and indeed, expected by our providers and their learners.

The programme accreditation process which is embedded in the Provider Registration process is defined in [\*Taught and Research Programme Accreditation Policy, Criteria and Processes\*](#).

It includes initial executive scrutiny, expert panel visit and report, provider response to panel recommendations, and formal accreditation decision by the full Council in respect of the inaugural programme of a provider. The beginning of the traditional academic year in early Autumn is often a critical date for providers. In order to give time to complete the programme validation process and to communicate the outcome to prospective students, we are setting a deadline for applications to be guaranteed normal consideration in time for the following academic year. This is the third Friday in January, i.e. **January 15<sup>th</sup> 2010**. . What this means for those applying for provider registration is that they must be ready to move to step 4 of the process by this date if they wish to have a programme validated in time

Applications submitted after this date will be dealt with as promptly as possible but the process may not have time to run to completion before Autumn. Programmes from new providers and programmes in new fields of learning sometimes take longer to consider. New fields of learning may require the development of new named awards or new standards and these functions are outside the normal programme accreditation timetable.

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