

THE-ICE Pre-accreditation Fast Track Procedure

Introduction

THE-ICE, with its accreditation schema, is looking to recognise those institutions that offer tourism, hospitality, events and culinary arts (TH&E) programmes regarded by their peers as espousing excellence in education, training and/or research and are constantly seeking to enhance and improve their education offerings. The accreditation is available to:

- University
- University of Applied Sciences
- University College
- School, College or Academy of Specialisation

THE-ICE believes that there are institutions, newcomers to the network, which are qualified to seek accreditation in the first instance, without necessarily embarking on the pre-accrediting activity. A new policy is introduced to fast track the accreditation process for such institutions. It outlines the key risk issues that can help THE-ICE to pre-qualify the applicant institutions, assessing their suitability to move through the Pre-accreditation and apply for accreditation directly. This will help save time and resources for both the applicant institutions as well as THE-ICE.

Fast Track Processes

Interview

This pre-qualifying assessment should be undertaken in person or via virtual communication platform in a collegiate manner by one or two auditors from THE-ICE Assessment Panel. The assessment will be an informal, non-binding aide-memoire for a discussion about the prima facie feasibility of the applicant institution in meeting the criteria of THE-ICE Standards of Excellence and securing accreditation. As such, it focuses on the top line risk factors (9 elements), and is by no means confirm or deny accreditation from THE-ICE. Rather, it is a guide for both the applicant institution and THE-ICE to consider should the institution decide to proceed directly with full accreditation.

The nine key elements:

1. **Governance - How is oversight of academic programmes undertaken?**

The institution should have an academic board chaired by person holding a PhD awarded in English (and with some university experience in the EU, US, NZ, Canada or Australia).

2. **Language: What is the language of instruction and assessment?**

Preferably English as the official national language, next best is English as the language of instruction and assessment.

3. **External supervision: Who oversees the conduct of the institution?**

Preferably a central national/state agency has some oversight role in institutional and/or programme accreditation.

4. **Other memberships: To what other organisations does the institution belong?**

Membership of like-minded organisations: CHRIE (Council on Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutional Education), INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education), TEFI (Tourism Education Future Initiative) is preferable.

5. **Age: How long has the institution been established and operating with functioning governance systems?**

Ideally, the School, Department or Unit offering, tourism, hospitality, culinary arts and events (TH&E) programmes has been graduating vocational and/or degree level students for say five years or more.

6. **Size: How many EFTSL (equivalent full-time student load) are enrolled?**

Ideally the institution has more than 100 EFTSL students.

7. **Diversity: What other fields of study are offered?**

This is not about accrediting any programmes beyond TH&E. Rather, if the institution has a “broad” rather than narrow portfolio of programmes, it is likely to be more “substantial” and thus capable of weathering the vicissitudes of the education sector. This needs to be seen in the context of the number of students enrolled and staff employed.

8. **Programme Coverage: What is the depth of the portfolio within the respective sector?**

As a marker of a robust, mature and substantial organisation, ideally the institution should offer a range of programmes available in the relevant education sector (Vocational or Higher Education), rather than just one or two (ie a HE institution that only offers Undergraduate programmes).

In the Vocational Education it should be up to Advanced or Higher Diploma, or Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Master as applicable. In Higher Education it should be either Bachelor programmes only, Bachelor, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma and Masters programmes only, or Bachelor, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma Masters, and up to PhD programmes, or up to the “limit” prescribed by institutional registration regulation and/or local law.

9. **Teaching staff: What is the language and educational level of teaching staff?**

They should ideally be a “reasonable” portion of native English speakers with a PhD or DBA, or holders of an English language qualification. Experience of teaching in a university (ideally in the EU, US, NZ, Canada or Australia) - Teaching experience in this context relates both to the number of years of experience in teaching as well as the diversity in tasks and positions (such as programme leader, head of School, acting head of school etc). It is reasonable to have more confidence in an institution that has a variety of teaching staff with extensive teaching experience as well as academics with diverse experience in tasks and positions than one with teaching staff with extensive teaching experience only.

A Pre-accreditation Fast Track template/check list will be used as frame of reference for designated auditor/auditors of THE-ICE Assessment Panel to conduct pre-qualifying dialogue with interested applicant institutions seeking fast-track.

Peer Review

The auditor is (the auditors are) to submit the summary findings of the discussion held with a recommendation of whether the applicant institution is qualified to fast-track, or not, to the Chair of THE-ICE Board and the Chair of THE-ICE Assessment Panel for consideration and approval.

The Chair of THE-ICE Board and the Chair of THE-ICE Assessment Panel will, based on the summary findings and recommendation submitted by the auditors, to decide if the applicant institution would meet the applicable criteria of THE-ICE Standards of Excellence for full accreditation, and be granted or denied pre-accreditation fast-track.

Notification

Once the Chairs have reached a decision, the Chief Executive Officer will notify the applicant institution of the pre-qualifying process outcome immediately.

Fee

A flat fee of AUS\$1,100