

Policy Document ETQA1: Provider Accreditation and Management



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Policy Document ETQA1: Provider Accreditation and Management



Policy Overview

Policy Purpose	To inform all constituents, Providers, and THETA ETQA staff of the policy and principles of THETA Provider accreditation and management.
Legal Basis	ETQA Regulations SAQA: Criteria and Guidelines for Providers
Terminology	All terminology used in this policy bears the implicit meaning as stated in the policy document: ETQA0: Glossary of Terms and Acronyms
Policy Statement	<p>All Providers delivering learning programmes which culminate in specified NQF qualifications or standards and/or manages the assessment thereof for certification purposes, must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be accredited by the THETA ETQA, or• registered by the THETA ETQA <p>THETA ETQA shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. only accredit constituent Providers that share a primary focus with THETA2. perform both institutional and learning programmes accreditation for those constituent Providers.3. perform only learning programmes approval for those Providers who are accredited by another ETQA and offer THETA related learning programmes.4. Accredit the applicant to perform education and training in terms of specific NQF unit standards and/or qualifications.

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Policy Overview, Continued

Certification of Learners

Authorized certification:

The THETA ETQA shall only honor certification requests made by:

- Accredited Providers,
- Formally registered Providers
- Formally licensed Providers and practitioners

Conditions:

Conditions for certification¹ are as follows:

- Provider has completed a Phase B accreditation
- The scope of certification request is formally part of the Provider's THETA recognized scope of provision
- The Provider has the recognized and registered ETD staff to conduct the appropriate assessments and moderations.

Appeals

A Provider may access the THETA Appeals Procedure² should the organization be dissatisfied with any of the following circumstances during Accreditation:

1. Accreditation Decision
2. Accreditation Process
3. Evaluation Team Members' conduct
4. Evidence Requirements

Supporting Resources

The following resources support the implementation of the Provider Accreditation & Management policy

Document No.	Document Name
CG1	Criteria and Guidelines for Accreditation
CG2	Criteria & Guidelines for Programme Strategy Design
CG3	Criteria & Guidelines for Assessment Strategy Design
CG4	Criteria & Guidelines for Assessment Design
CG5	Criteria & Guidelines for Assessment Guide Design
CG6	Accreditation Process Flow

¹ For detail on certification refer to ETQA10 "Certification"

² Refer to ETQA5 "Appeals" Policy document for process of Appeals

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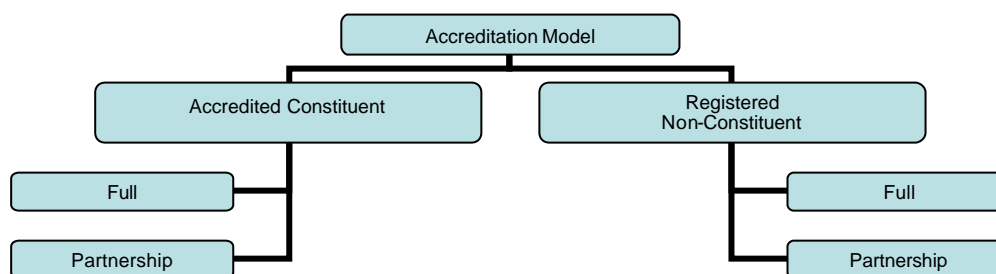


THETA Accreditation Model

Operational Categories

All Providers providing learning and/or assessment within the THETA ETQA scope, will be classified and managed in terms of the THETA Provider Model in accordance with SAQA requirements³.

Providers are categorized as **constituent or non-constituent Providers**.



Category Description

THETA's relationship with the different Provider categories is depicted below:

No	If ...	Principles / Assumptions	Then
1	Constituent Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Levy payer with THETA, and/or ▪ Primary Focus of provision resides with THETA ▪ Not accredited by any other ETQA ▪ Complies to SAQA criteria for accreditation ▪ Offers unit standard based learning programmes in THETA scope of accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accredit Provider
2	Non-constituent Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provider accredited by another ETQA, i.e. public, multi-purpose or CHE / Umalusi ▪ Primary focus does not reside with THETA ETQA, but offers provision of selected THETA qualifications and/or standards ▪ Provision requires MoU intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Register Provider

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³ SAQA: "Criteria & Guidelines for Providers"

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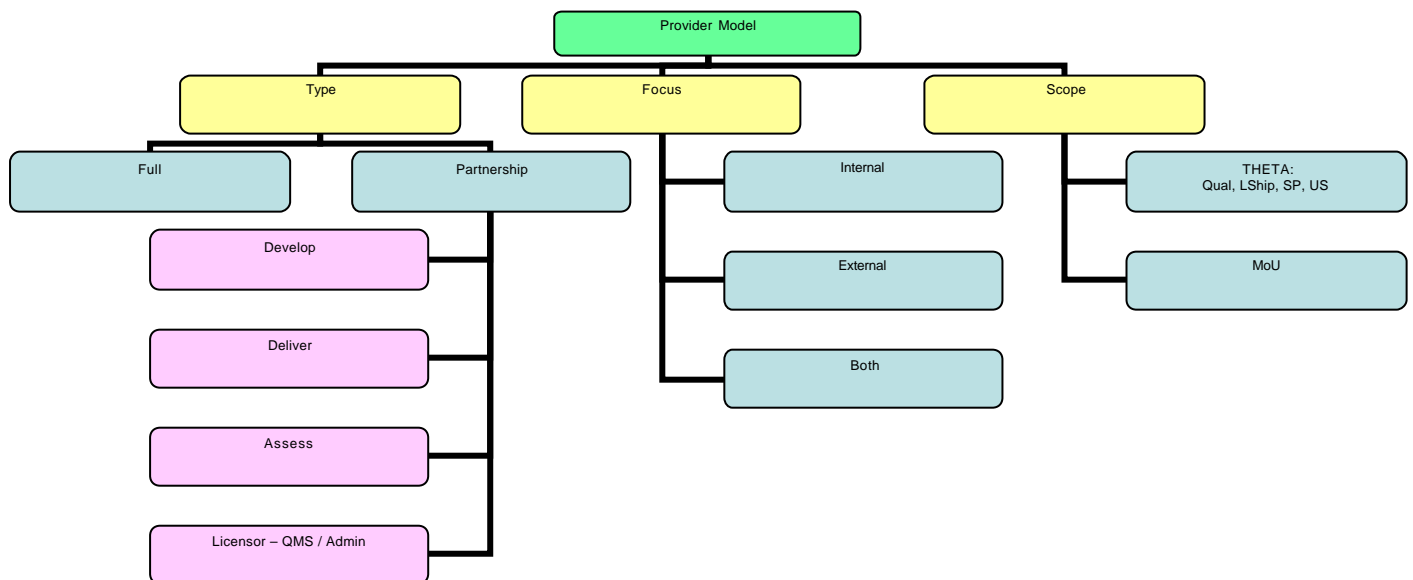
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THETA Accreditation Model, Continued

Provider Model

The THETA ETQA adopts the following model in the implementation of the accreditation policy within its scope of provision.



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THETA Accreditation Model, Continued

**Option 1:
Accreditation**
(Full or partnership)

In expressing an Intent to become **accredited / registered** with the THETA ETQA, a Provider must clearly communicate its intent with regards to the following elements of provision **BEFORE** the accreditation / registration process can be mobilized:

No	Accreditation Element	Description
1	Type of Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full Provider – delivery and assessment, or ▪ Partnership Provider, i.e. design, delivery, assessment, licensee / licensor (QMS & Admin)
2	Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Internal, external or both, or SMME practitioners
3	Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unit Standards and/or qualifications in the Primary Focus of THETA ETQA, sector focus and ▪ Unit Standards and qualifications outside of the THETA primary focus

**Option 2:
Register non-constituent**
(Full or partnership)

In expressing an Intent to become registered as a non-constituent Provider with the THETA ETQA, a Provider must clearly communicate its intent with regards to the following elements **BEFORE** the registration and approval process can be mobilized:

No	Registration Element	Description
1	ETQA Affiliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Current accreditation status ▪ Primary ETQA request for an MoU relationship on behalf of the Provider
2	Nature of registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scope of partnerships, programmes and ETD staff intended within THETA ETQA primary focus

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THETA Accreditation Model, Continued

Option 3: License Agreement

In expressing an Intent to be recognized as a licensed Provider partner with the THETA ETQA, a Provider must clearly communicate its intent with regards to the following elements **BEFORE** the licensing process can be mobilized:

No	License Element	Description
1	Professional Association	▪ Nature of licensing interest, i.e. programme, ETD staff, delivery, assessment, QMS
2	Type of Practitioner	▪ Design, delivery, assessment

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ETQA Operational Principles

Principles of Accreditation

The THETA ETQA adheres to the criteria and guidelines for Provider accreditation as determined by SAQA, and adopts the following principles in respect of Provider accreditation.

No	Principle	Description
1	Transparent, fair and equitable	The accreditation process will be open, equitable, fair, transparent and as simple as possible while at the same time being efficient and cost effective

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ETQA Operational Principles, Continued

Accreditation Decisions

- The THETA ETQA shall document each phase of the accreditation, and produce an Accreditation Report⁴ for each Provider in the Accreditation process.
- The Accreditation Report will be to provide the ETQA and the applicant with an objective view on whether the *compliance* and *conforming* requirements have been met
- The ETQA must be in the position to fully defend their recommendations, by reference to documentation reviewed in the course of the verification process and the evidence gathered during the process
- An accreditation decision will be based on the *submission of evidence* only, as follows:
 1. Provisional Accreditation
 2. Full Accreditation
 3. Re-Accreditation

1. Provisional Accreditation

1. Where the Provider does not meet all the criteria for accreditation, the ETQA may grant such a Provider *provisional accreditation* for a time period *not exceeding two years*, provided that:
 - the interest of the learners are protected, and
 - a programme of development has been agreed upon.
2. During the provisional accreditation period the Provider shall undergo development as agreed in a *Development Plan* between the Provider and the ETQA, which is designed to enable the Provider to meet the required criteria for full accreditation.

2. Full Accreditation

Where the Provider meets all the Provider accreditation criteria, the Provider will be awarded full accreditation for a period of five (5) years, as per the ETQA Regulations.

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⁴ For detail, see "Accreditation Report"

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ETQA Operational Principles, Continued

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- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 3.
Re-
accreditation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Provider will be required, prior to the five-year lapse period, to apply for re-accreditation. 2. A Self Evaluation of the Provider against all the SAQA criteria is required, including an ETQA Site Visit and ETQA Audit against the Self Evaluation Criteria. 3. Re-accreditation will be dependent on the outcomes of the moderation and prior audit results, as well as the Re-accreditation Evaluation. |
|-------------------------------------|--|
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- | | |
|---|--|
| Provider
Accreditation
Certification | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon accreditation, each accredited constituent Provider will be issued with a certificate of accreditation stating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Provider is a constituent Provider of the THETA; and • The nature of the accreditation granted (That the • The nature of the accreditation granted (i.e. full, provisional, partnership etc). • The dates upon which such accreditation shall commence and terminate. • Scope of accreditation 2. The accredited Provider will be required to display the accreditation certificate at all times. 3. No accreditation certificates will be issued to registered Providers and licensed practitioners. |
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ETQA Operational Principles, Continued

Use of the THETA Logo

Authorized parties:

THETA grants permission for the following Providers to make use of the THETA logo⁵ in marketing of their services:

- Accredited Providers,
- Formally registered Providers
- Formally licensed Providers & practitioners

Conditions:

Conditions for use of the logo are as follows:

- Provider has completed a Phase B accreditation
 - The scope of the logo use is directly related to the formally recognized accreditation scope of the Provider
-

Communication **Provider Communication**

- The THETA ETQA will liaise with **one contact person** within the Provider organization throughout the process of accreditation

Constituent Communication

- The THETA ETQA undertakes to regularly update its constituency via the website and other media on progress that has been made and any new information about the registration and accreditation process

Inter-seta Communication

- The THETA ETQA will play a liaison role between the constituent Provider and other ETQA's where the unit standards and qualifications fall outside the primary focus of the THETA ETQA
 - THETA undertakes to enter into a formal Memorandum of Understanding with all EQA's regarding qualifications and unit standards offered across providers.
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⁵ Refer to SSM3 "Use of THETA Trademarks" Policy for the process and conditions of logo usage.

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Provider Operational Principles

Accreditation Contract

- The Provider application for accreditation defines clear standards, policies and procedures that it intends meeting during the five (5) year period of accreditation.
- The provided information shall constitute a contract between the Provider and the THETA ETQA on the range of quality of services to be Provider to the learner.
- During the accreditation period the THETA ETQA will conduct quality audits & monitoring interventions
- The accredited Provider shall issue a declaration of its willingness to subject itself to quality audits.
- THETA ETQA reserves the right to validate and verify such Provider practice regularly as part of the contract of accreditation.

Partnerships

The ETQA recognizes that different partnerships can exist within provision, with regards to:

- Delivery sites
- Assessment sites
- Theory provision
- Practical provision
- Quality Management Infrastructure

Despite the recognition of partnerships, the Providers maintain responsibility to show evidence of compliance to **all accreditation criteria** within the partnership.

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Provider Operational Principles, Continued

Role Players in a Licensing Agreement

In expressing an Intent to become a **Licensor / Licensee** with the THETA ETQA, a constituent Provider must clearly communicate its intent with regards to the following elements of provision **BEFORE** the licensing process can be mobilized:

Licensed Partnership Provision			
3.1	Professional Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional association with a recognized sector interest and membership ▪ Has legal or professional interest and history in ensuring the quality of provision and standard setting in the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensor
3.2	SMME / Emerging Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small business exempt from levies ▪ Primary Focus of provision resides with THETA ETQA ▪ Not accredited by any other ETQA ▪ Unable to comply to Provider criteria for accreditation by itself ▪ Affiliated to a THETA recognized, licensed Provider association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensee / Practitioner

Provider Focus

Provider focus may be internally (*own staff only*), externally (*client base only*), or both.

In the event of a licensed agreement, the focus of provision may be on the licensee / practitioner itself (through professional membership), and a devolved learner focus through the practitioner.

Provider Status

- On review of the accreditation evidence, a Provider may qualify for
- provisional registration for a period of time, based on a development plan towards full accreditation, or
 - full accreditation for a period of 5 years, based on compliance to all SAQA criteria, or
 - licensed agreement of provision in a defined partnership

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Provider Operational Principles, Continued

Provider Scope A Provider may only obtain accreditation for unit standards and qualifications within the THETA scope.

Memorandum of Understanding Should any additional unit standards and/or qualifications fall within the Provider scope, the ETQA shall establish a Memorandum of Understanding with the secondary ETQA AFTER initial accreditation.

CHE Provision THETA recognizes the CHE legislated mandate over learning programmes and qualifications on level 5 and above, whether such programmes are within the THETA accreditation scope or not.

In terms of the Department of Education requirements for registration of providers of Higher Education, THETA shall advise providers applying for accreditation of learning programmes and qualifications on level 5 within the THETA accreditation scope and above of the DoE registration requirements and process , to be completed as part of the accreditation process⁶.

- Licensed Provider Agreements**
- Professional associations / federations may apply for licensing rights on behalf of their members.
 - The ETQA recognizes a Model of Approved Provision through professional associations, where the association will provide the quality management infrastructure on behalf of members, in particular SMME / emerging practitioners.
 - The ETQA may devolve certain functions of quality assurance to the licensed Provider, i.e. moderation, standardized programme or assessment design, administrative / record keeping functions.
 - The ETQA **retains the right of direct access to and accreditation of a** partnership practitioner over the licensed practitioner, despite the agreement of infrastructure with the licensing partner.
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⁶ See CHE / THETA Working Process document for further details

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Provider Operational Principles, Continued

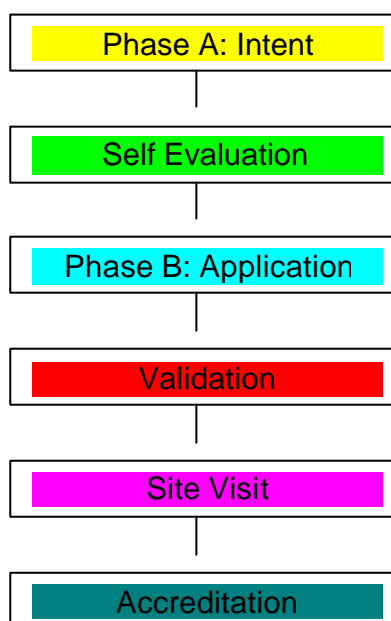
Registration of non-constituent Providers

Should a Provider be accredited with another ETQA, and agreement in the form of a **Memorandum of Understanding** will be entered into regarding:

- Programme approval
- ETD staff capacity
- Partnership roles
- Quality assurance of administrative functions.

Accreditation Process

The following diagram shows the Phases of the accreditation process.



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Provider Operational Principles, Continued

Process, Steps and required Documents

Tabled below are the various phases for the accreditation process steps per phase, as well as the documentation required per phase.

No	Process Phase	Procedure Steps	Documentation Required
Provider Process – prior to accreditation audit			
1	Intent	<p><i>The applicant:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Shows intent to be accredited States intended scope of training <p><i>The ETQA:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Validates the request Forwards Provider documentation for Phase B 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase A Form THETA Qualifications Framework THETA Skills Programmes Framework Criteria & Guidelines for Accreditation
2	Self Evaluation	<p><i>The applicant:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Completes the self evaluation questionnaire in the Criteria & Guidelines Document Prepares the development plan Implements the development action plan Reviews self evaluation status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria & Guidelines for Accreditation Programme Criteria & Guidelines for Programme Design Criteria & Guidelines for assessment design

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Provider Operational Principles, Continued

Continued ... Accreditation Process, Steps and required Documents

No	Process Phase	Procedure Steps	Documentation Required
3	Application	<p><i>The applicant:</i></p> <p>9. Prepares the Provider application</p> <p>10. Submits the Provider application to the ETQA</p> <p><i>The ETQA:</i></p> <p>11. Acknowledges receipt of the application</p>	<p>Accreditation Pack:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase B Application Pack • Programme Approval Pack • QMS Approval Pack • Appendices • ETD Registration Forms
ETQA Process – accreditation audit			
4	Evaluation	<p><i>The ETQA:</i></p> <p>12. Verifies the application</p> <p>13. Schedules a site visit</p> <p>14. Briefs the project team</p> <p>15. Confirms requirements of site visit with applicant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation Report • Programme Approval Report • Standard letters – Site Visit Notification
5	Site Visit	<p>16. Provider prepares for site visit</p> <p>17. ETQA conducts site visit</p> <p>18. ETQA produces preliminary report</p> <p>19. Provider responds to site visit (where required)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accreditation Report - Provider Application File
6	Accreditation	<p><i>ETQA:</i></p> <p>20. Ratifies the report</p> <p>21. Submits report to Provider</p> <p>22. Awards accreditation:</p> <p>1. Provisional</p> <p>2. Full Accreditation</p> <p>3. Licensed / Partnership Accreditation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ETQA Accreditation Report • Conditional Compliance Plan

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Provider Operational Principles, Continued

Quality Assurance

All Provider management processes must be documented within the ETQA.
All evaluations of Phase B Provider applications must be completed within 60 days of initiation with the ETQA

Quality Indicators	Description
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number of Provider appeals and/or complaints• Number of Provider accreditation refusals, and reasons thereof• Time frames for Provider accreditation, extensions, appeals and de-accreditations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual Accreditation Status Report

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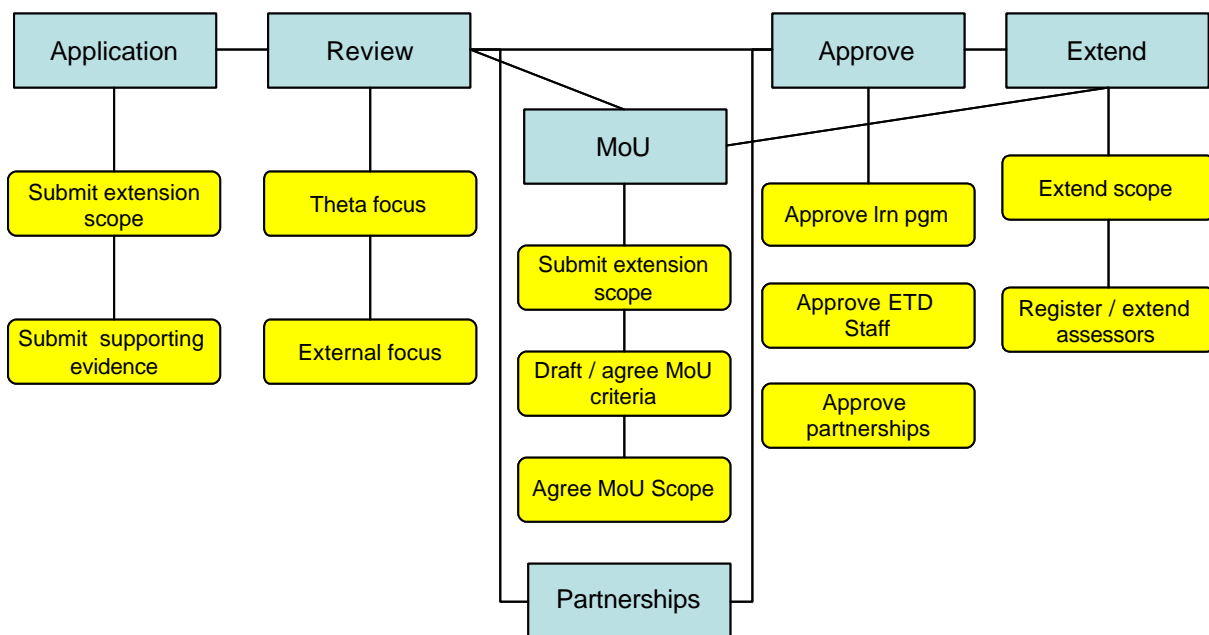
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Extension of Accreditation

Process of Extension

Phase C of the Accreditation Process allows for extension of accreditation. The following process is followed after initial accreditation for the extension of provision scope.



Extension of Accreditation Scope

- A THETA accredited Provider may apply for an extension of accreditation scope for standards and qualifications other than those in its primary focus.
- THETA ETQA will facilitate accreditation thereof with the appropriate ETQA.
- The THETA ETQA will take responsibility for entering into MoU's on behalf of Providers

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Extension of Accreditation, Continued

Extension of Accreditation Period

Phase A Extension

- A Provider has a period of **12 months** between Phase A and Phase B to obtain accreditation with THETA ETQA.
- Should a Provider wish to extend the period of recognition between Phase A & Phase B:
 - a written application for extension
 - with a motivation as to reasons why, and
 - an overview of capacity building requirements
- No automatic extension of accreditation will take place should the Provider fail to apply for extension.
- Should the Provider fail to apply for extension of the Phase A accreditation period, the Provider's Intent (Phase A) will expire, and his intent removed from the THETA ETQA database as a potential Provider.

Phase B Extension

- After Phase B has been completed, and a status of 2 years (provisional accreditation) with Development plan has been completed, the Provider needs to make formal application to THETA to have his provisional status converted to full accreditation.
- Should the Provider not apply for extension into full accreditation, de-accreditation of the Provider will happen in one month after the expiry date of the provisional accreditation.
- If the Development Plan has been met within / before 2 years or before the expiry date, a formal application needs to be submitted, with Development Plan Status Report for full accreditation.

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De-Accreditation

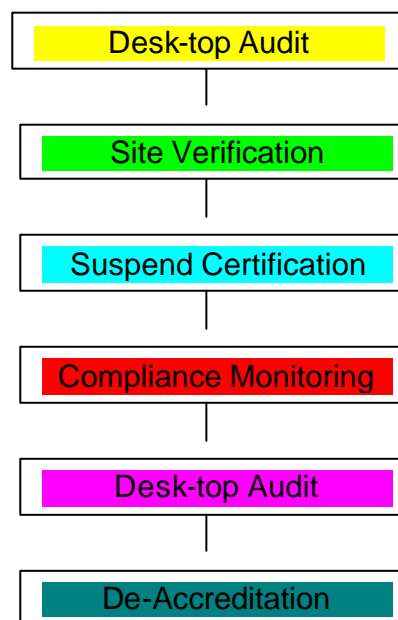
Withdrawal of accreditation

Withdrawal of accreditation will apply in the following instance:

- The THETA ETQA is in receipt of sufficient evidence which indicates that the Provider has been involved in gross irregularities
- If the THETA ETQA finds, through a structured process of investigation, that the Provider fails to perform its functions satisfactorily
- Where the Provider has been provided with sufficient support and assistance and given a reasonable time frame to improve performance and the accreditation team reports that the Provider fails to meet the accreditation criteria

Process of de-accreditation

The following process of de-accreditation shall be followed:



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De-Accreditation, Continued

Continued ... Process of de-accreditation

No	Process Phase	Procedure Steps	Documentation Required
1	Desk-top Review	<p>The ETQA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluates notifications and pattern of sub-standard irregularities 2. Requests Provider to submit information for desk-top audit 3. Performs desk-top evaluation 4. Drafts initial desk-top verification report 5. Evaluates need for a site verification 6. Informs Provider of outcome of desk-top audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for information • Desk top verification report • Notification of site visit
<p>Note: Should the Provider refuse to submit information or are unable to do so within the specified time period, thereby preventing the THETA ETQA in performing the required desk-top audit, the THETA ETQA shall proceed directly to step 3 of the de-accreditation process.</p>			
2	Site Verification	<p>The ETQA:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Conducts the site visit for verification purposes 8. Completes verification report 9. Prepares the Conditional Compliance Plan 10. Informs Provider of outcome of the site verification audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Verification Report • Conditional Compliance Plan
<p>Note: Should the Provider refuse access to his premises, or refuse to give permission for the verification to go ahead, such site visit shall be suspended with immediately. THETA ETQA shall proceed directly to step 3 of the de-accreditation process.</p>			

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De-Accreditation, Continued

Continued ... Process of de-accreditation

No	Process Phase	Procedure Steps	Documentation Required
3	Suspend certification	The ETQA: 11. Notifies the Provider of the suspension of certification, conditions and time frames of compliance 12. Advises the Provider of his rights of appeal 13. Publishes such information on the ETQA web-site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification of suspension Appeals policy
4	Conditional Compliance Monitoring	The ETQA: 14. Monitors the Provider's compliance to the Conditional Compliance Plan 15. Corresponds with the Provider regarding the quality and acceptability of the compliance progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conditional Compliance Plan Follow up verification report Acknowledgement of receipt
<p>Note: Should the information submitted by the Provider comply with ETQA requirements, the Provider shall :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> be notified thereof, suspension of certification be lifted, and notification thereof be published on the web-site 			
5	Desk-top Audit	ETQA: 16. Performs desk-top evaluation 17. Requests Provider to submit additional information for desk-top audit, where required 18. Evaluates need for a site verification 19. Drafts final verification report 20. Corresponds with the Provider regarding the quality and acceptability of the compliance progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall ETQA Conditional Compliance Schedule Acknowledgement of receipt Final follow up verification report

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De-Accreditation, Continued

Continued ... Process of de-accreditation

No	Process Phase	Procedure Steps	Documentation Required
Note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should the Provider not comply with the Conditional Compliance Plan as agreed to, or refuse to comply, such Provider shall be notified of his breach of agreement and pending de-accreditation, and given a time period within which to comply with the ETQA requirements. THETA ETQA shall thereafter proceed directly to step 6 of the de-accreditation process. 			
6	De-accreditation	The ETQA: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Notifies Provider of intention to de-accredit within a specific time-period 22. Advises the Provider of his rights of appeal 23. De-accredit the Provider on the THETA ETQA database and NLRD, and 24. Publishes such information on the ETQA web-site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ETQA de-accreditation letter

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Policy Maintenance

Quality Assurance / Continuous Improvement

A yearly audit will be conducted by the ETQA Advisor and Quality Assurors, and random input for the improvement of processes will be obtained from key stakeholders.

The nature of the Audit and Input will be to determine:

- Problems encountered in the Provider Accreditation and Management System of THETA,
 - Possible improvements in system, documents, staff expertise and turn around times
-

Policy Review

An annual review will be done of the policy and position stated herein by the ETQA Manager, and recommendations will be reviewed, documented and implemented.

Non-Conformance

The following actions will be regarded as a non-conformance:

Provider:

- Failure to comply with accreditation requirements
- Failure to submit information as requested for evaluation purposes

ETQA:

- Failure to comply to the standard processes and documentation outlined in the accreditation (and related) processes by ETQA staff will be regarded as a serious breach of performance standards, and shall lead to disciplinary action
-

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