

HTQ PROCESS AND APPLICATION TIMELINE: CYCLE 5 PRIMARY WINDOW

The application windows for cycle 5 will be as follows:

Primary window: Monday 11th March 2024 – Friday 12th April 2024

Secondary window: Monday 23rd September 2024 – Friday 25th October 2024

We strongly recommend all new applicants and all Ofqual regulated Awarding Organisations submit in the **primary window** to ensure their applications are approved before cycle 5 closes in March 2025.

The following timeline will help you prepare your application for the cycle 5 **primary window**.

Any questions, get in touch with us: HTQ.Approvals@education.gov.uk.

NOVEMBER 2023 – FEBRUARY 2024

PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION

1. Register your interest

If you are interested in submitting a qualification for a HTQ Quality Mark, consider registering your interest to receive useful tips and key updates.

[HTQ Cycle 5 - Register your interest](#)

We will keep you informed with useful tips, newsletters and key dates.

2. Read through and watch our preparation resources

We have [several videos to guide you through the key elements of your application](#). We recommend you view these before you begin your application.

Also read our [Preparation Checklist for a written overview](#), including time estimates and further reading.

Watch our [Cycle 5 webinar](#) to find answers to any application questions.

3. Collect your evidence and draft your application

We strongly encourage you to prepare your KSB Mapping spreadsheet, Employer Engagement evidence and Assessment Materials **before** the application window opens on March 11th 2024.

You can also use the offline application form to help you prepare your application. However, you will only be able to submit your application following a support session (see point 4 below).

As noted in our Preparation Checklist, preparing your application may take several weeks – months depending on your circumstances, so we encourage you to begin no later than January 2024 for this primary window.

You can [contact us by email](#) or [arrange a support call](#) at any time, and we can provide high-level feedback on early drafts.

4. Attend a support session with IfATE before the application window opens

Before you submit your application for HTQ approval you will need to book a [support session](#) with a member of our team to discuss your application. You should only book this once you have used the Preparation Checklist to draft your application.

Before the call you will be asked to:

- provide your qualification title and credit value
- state whether there are any specific occupational standards you wish to discuss
- state any area(s) of the approvals process you wish to discuss

Following this call, you will be given access to the online application form to submit your application (you can, however, prepare your application using the offline application form).

11th MARCH – 12TH APRIL 2024

PRIMARY APPLICATION WINDOW OPENS: TIME TO SUBMIT

5. Complete and submit the application form

Complete the application form in full and submit it before the window closes on 12th April 2024. We will send you an email to confirm that we have received your application.

To ensure your application progresses, please ensure you have carefully consulted our Cycle 5 Approvals Criteria and get in touch with any questions:

HTQ.Approvals@education.gov.uk.

MARCH – OCTOBER 2024

APPLICATION REVIEWS

6. IfATE review your application

Our team will conduct a comprehensive analysis of all applications received. This involves standardised peer reviews and quality assurance checks. We will also gather feedback from regulators as part of our evaluation process.

6.1 Threshold check

As part of our analysis we will first check that the application meets the following five minimum requirements.

1. The awarding body or higher education provider must be on Ofqual/ OfS register and the application must include evidence that qualification is recognised/registered with Statutory Regulator where relevant.
2. All requested attachments as set out in the cycle 5 approvals criteria must be submitted, including correct number of complete sample assessment materials.
3. The application must include evidence from at least two different named employers indicating support for the specific qualification.
4. No more than 10% of KSBs in the occupational standard are insufficiently covered by the qualification. For example, if the standard has 60 KSBs which can be fully delivered in a course of education and we find that more than 6 are not covered in the content of the qualification with supporting evidence, then your application will not meet this threshold.
5. Nothing about the structure of the qualification falls short of our criteria i.e. no qualification pathways that do not align to an occupational standard and all possible module, unit or occupational pathway combinations cover the knowledge, skills and behaviours in the occupation(s) to which the qualification relates.

We will update you once we have established if your application meets these requirements. You will have the chance to reply and let us know if you disagree with our judgement.

6.2 What happens if your application doesn't meet these minimum requirements?

Applications that do meet the minimum requirements will proceed to be considered for approval in that cycle. If your application does not meet these requirements it will not be considered for approval in that cycle, but applicants may resubmit in future cycles. If an application is not approved in cycle 5.1 it may be resubmitted in cycle 5.2.

6.3 Funding and 'first teach' implications

We will analyse applications in the order in which they are received. Some applications that are approved in cycle 5.1 may be approved in time for a first teach date of September 2025. Applications approved in cycle 5.1 that do not achieve this first teach date will have a first teach date of September 2026.

All Applications approved in cycle 5.2 will have a first teach date of September 2026.

7. Request for additional information

We may reach out to you for clarification or additional information. We will typically provide you with 1 – 4 weeks to submit any extra information to us. We will encourage you to attend a support call should you have any questions.

8. Route Panel comments

[Route panels](#) made up of industry professionals will have the opportunity to provide their input on your application.

9. Approvals Committee decision

Our [Approvals Committee](#) will review your application and make a decision regarding approval.

JUNE 2024 – NOVEMBER 2024

APPLICATION OUTCOMES

10. Receive your decision letter

We will inform you of the Approval Committee's decision regarding your application.

If your application is approved, you will need to complete a second form, providing additional details.

Some applications that are approved in the **primary window** may be approved in time for a first teach date of September 2025. Applications approved in cycle **primary window** that do not achieve this teach date will have a first teach date of September 2026.

All applications approved in the **secondary window** will have a first teach date of September 2026.

Our ability to approve qualifications for early delivery will depend on the quality and quantity of submissions.

All applicants will have a final decision by March 2025 when the cycle closes.

11. Schedule a post-decision call

You will be invited to attend a Teams call to provide feedback on the application process and for successful applicants to discuss the HTQ Quality Mark Terms of Use.

12. Qualifications added to our approved list

A published list of all approval decisions will be available on our website from June 2025. We do not publish any qualifications that are withdrawn or unsuccessful.