

FETAC Key Dates and Information 2011

Key Dates 2011

FETAC Business System (FBS)

FETAC has commenced the roll out of its new business system (FBS). A number of centres have agreed to use this system for the February certification period and we will increase that number for the June certification period. If your centre is interested in participating in the first phase of the system rollout please contact fbspilot@fetac.ie We would be pleased to hear from you.

NOTE Centres entering learners for certification at levels 1 and 2 please contact Maria McLoughlin at mmcloughlin@fetac.ie

February Certification 2011 Levels 3-6

1 January	Web Candidate Entry System (WCES) www.fetac.net opens for February 2011 certification for centres
10 January	Closing date for receipt of award and module estimates for February 2011 certification period Closing date for receipt of data files for uploading
5 February	All authenticated results must be submitted and Declaration completed (step 8 WCES) through the Web Candidate Entry System Web Candidate Entry System closes
28 February	Issue of certificates for February 2011 certification period

June Certification 2011 Levels 3-6

10 February	Web Candidate Entry System (WCES) www.fetac.net opens for June 2011 certification for centres
10 March	Closing date for receipt of award and module estimates for June 2011 certification period Closing date for receipt of data files for uploading
5 June	All authenticated results must be submitted and Declaration completed (step 8 WCES) through the Web Candidate Entry System Web Candidate Entry System closes
8 July	Issue of certificates for June 2011 certification period.

Notes and Reminders

Certification

FETAC's four certification periods are now more evenly distributed throughout the year enabling efficient turnaround of certification for the benefit of learners.

In addition, these certification periods now reflect the closing date of each certification period, i.e. for February, June, October and December.

NOTE Centres planning to submit learners for certification in October and December 2011 will use the FETAC Business System (FBS)

October Certification 2011 Levels 1-6

10
September

Closing date for centres to inform FETAC (certification@fetac.ie) that they are submitting for October certification. FETAC will issue each centre a new password for FETAC Business System (FBS) and detailed guidance on using the new system.

5
October

All authenticated results must be submitted and declaration completed. FETAC Business System (FBS) closes.

20
October

Issue of certificates to all centres for October 2011 certification period.

December Certification 2011 Levels 1-6

10
November

Closing date for centres to inform FETAC (certification@fetac.ie) that they are submitting for December certification. FETAC will issue each centre a new password for FETAC Business System (FBS) and detailed guidance on using the new system.

5
December

All authenticated results must be submitted and declaration completed. FETAC Business System (FBS) closes.

20
December

Issue of certificates to all centres for December 2011 certification period.

Notes and Reminders (cont.)

Accuracy of Data

It is your responsibility to ensure that all details are accurately entered prior to completing your centre's Declaration.

Compliance with Award Structure

From 2011, major awards will be awarded based strictly on the award structure and rules published in the Award Directory on www.fetac.ie. Centres using component combinations which differ from the published award structures should amend their programmes accordingly. Queries about published award structures should be made via the Contact Us page on www.fetac.ie, specifying 'Award Structure' as the query area.

Dual Process

To date FETAC is not yet in a position to advise providers funded by the Department of Education and Skills about a Dual Process for 2011. Further information will be issued in January 2011.

Certification Helpline

A Certification Helpline certification@fetac.ie is operated to manage your queries. All queries are assigned a call number and are dealt with in strict rotation, ensuring a prompt and efficient service.

Common Award System

FETAC's Strategic Plan commits it to putting in place a comprehensive suite of awards at levels 1 to 6 of the National Framework of Qualifications. It is planned to achieve this is by:

- a) the migration of existing awards into the Common Awards System (CAS) and
- b) the development of new awards in new areas.

There are a limited number of CAS awards currently published – for details view

www.fetac.ie/fetac/awardsinfo/newawards/newawards.htm These are generally new awards and providers interested in them must have their programmes validated before they can deliver programmes leading to these awards to learners.

The migration project commenced in June 2008 and is due to be completed by December 2011. A great deal of activity has taken place to move existing awards into the CAS. This included participation by the IVEA, FÁS, Fáilte Ireland and Teagasc. Migration is a large scale operation and at the end of June 2010 35% of awards have been migrated. However they have not yet been published. FETAC needs to manage and coordinate the publication and deactivation processes of current awards. As all CAS awards will require providers to have their programmes validated, FETAC needs to allow time for providers to complete programmes against existing awards and comply with the validation requirements for new awards.

FETAC will publish detailed information in the Autumn on the Common Awards System (CAS) and how the changeover from existing awards to CAS awards will happen.

Programme Validation

Any programme leading to a common award must be validated by FETAC, prior to commencement of the programme. Only registered providers, who have agreed quality assurance systems with FETAC may submit programmes for validation. For further details view Programme Validation at www.fetac.ie/fetac/providers/registration/validation.htm

Self Evaluation of Programmes and Services

Under the terms and conditions of registration with FETAC, providers must carry out a self-evaluation of at least one of their programmes within a calendar year of the date of their initial registration and at least once every five years thereafter. This evaluation process is critical to ensure the effective application of quality assurance policies and procedures of providers and evaluation reports will be used by FETAC for monitoring.

For details on Self-Evaluation of Programmes and Services view Section B9 of the QA Guidelines at www.fetac.ie/fetac/documents/Policy_and_Guidelines_on_Provider_QA_v1.3.pdf. FETAC has developed templates to assist providers when conducting a self-evaluation. The templates include a Self-Evaluation Checklist, a Self-Evaluation Report and a Programme Improvement Plan. While the Evaluation Report and Programme Improvement Plan are for the provider, copies of completed reports should be submitted to qa@fetac.ie

Compliance with Data Protection Legislation

As a FETAC registered provider you collect personal data for your learners. This data is required by FETAC to process results and issue certificates to learners. You should be aware of your obligations under Data Protection Legislation 1998 and 2003.

To ensure you are dealing with the data you collect appropriately please contact www.dataprotection.ie

Monitoring

A key function of FETAC is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provider's quality system to ensure the integrity of FETAC's awards. The FETAC policy on monitoring sets out the features and processes of monitoring, which comprises desk monitoring, site visits and follow up and review by a team of regionally based monitors.

FETAC has in place a monitoring process whereby a review of the provider's quality system is undertaken and a standard monitoring report is completed, identifying good practice and areas for improvement as appropriate.

The current focus of monitoring is the effectiveness of the provider's quality systems and targets providers offering FETAC awards across a wide range of fields and sectors.

All providers can expect to be monitored by FETAC as a condition of registration. Providers are contacted in advance and fully informed about the monitoring process by the FETAC monitor.

Individual providers monitoring reports and the 2008 and 2009 Annual Reports are available to download on the FETAC website www.fetac.ie

Protection for Learners

As set out in Part VII of the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act, 1999 providers who offer programmes for longer than three months on a commercial and profit making basis are required to put in place Protection for Learners arrangements. This is in order to protect the learner where the provider ceases to provide the programme concerned.

FETAC would like to remind providers that these arrangements must be put in place for each programme offered and agreed with FETAC prior to the programme being offered.

Providers who do not have appropriate arrangements in place will be subject to penalties as set out in Section 47 of the Act. For details on the policy and specific requirements see www.fetac.ie

Provider 5 Year Review

A condition of a provider's registration agreement is 'participation in a FETAC review of its quality assurance system with in a maximum period of five years from the date of registration'.

FETAC would like to advise providers that the five year review of their quality assurance is now planned for those providers registered for more than 5 years. This will comprise a review by FETAC of an evaluation by the provider of their quality assurance in the context of a range of quality indicators. Following the FETAC review of the provider evaluation the registration agreement will be renewed or withdrawn. Providers scheduled for review will be contacted by FETAC in due course.

Access

FETAC has prepared guidelines for providers on the specific information that they must make available to learners in order to fully inform learners about access and progression opportunities within the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

For details view Information for Learners: Guidelines for Providers

www.fetac.ie/fetac/documents/Info_for_Learners_Guidelines_for_Providers.pdf

and also the publications Progression from FETAC Level 5 Certificates and Level 6 Advanced Certificates to Higher Education Courses 2010 www.fetac.ie/fetac/documents/Prog_HEC_2010.pdf

and Progression from FETAC Advanced Certificate – Craft to Higher Education Courses

www.fetac.ie/fetac/documents/Progression_from_FETAC_Adv_Cert-Craft_to_HE_Courses.pdf

Quality Assured Assessment Requirements

FETAC's Assessment policy sets out a distinct role for the provider and FETAC in relation to assessment. All registered providers are required to have in place and appropriately documented, procedures for:

- Fair and consistent assessment
- Internal verification
- External authentication, including the assignment of an external authenticator
- Results approval
- Learner appeals

External Authenticators Panel

The appointed panel of external authenticators, with contact details, is available on FETAC's Web Candidate Entry System (WCES) www.fetac.net

Providers are responsible for ensuring the Authenticator carries out their role and completes a full authentication report confirming compliance with national standards for the award.

FETAC

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Relevant email contact details are available on www.fetac.ie