All funded non-government organisations that are required to demonstrate compliance with the Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) through *certification* **have up to 18 months** to complete an independent third-party audit and achieve HSQF certification. To help planning and preparation, the key milestones below need to be met by organisations:

**12 Months**

**Continue planning and preparation for your audit.**

**Work with your certification body on audit planning and your organisation’s readiness for the audit.**

**Your certification body will complete a Stage 1 audit first. This involves reviewing your documentation to assess whether your organisation is ready for the onsite (or Stage 2) audit.**

**Commencement Date**

**This is the date your organisation’s legal obligations to achieve HSQF certification commence. Please refer to your service agreement or contact your contract officer to confirm your commencement date.**

**12-15 Months**

**Your onsite (Stage 2) audit will occur between 12 and 15 months. Your organisation should prepare in consultation with your certification body.**

**Activities will include:**

* **obtaining consents from customers/clients participating in the audit process**
* **gathering documentation for review by the auditor including staff and client files, organisation records, policies, procedures and registers**
* **liaising with your certification body to confirm the audit schedule including the sites to be visited and any other requirements.**

**At the completion of the audit, the auditors will outline findings and any corrective actions that need to be made before certification is granted. You will receive a copy of the audit report which will outline areas of good practice and areas for improvement. If any non-conformities are identified, the auditors will provide your organisation with a set timeframe for identifying the cause of the issues and developing and implementing corrective actions. The auditor will then assess the effectiveness of the corrective actions.**

**During this 6-9-month period, you should choose and contract a certification body. Refer to the HSQF website for tips on what to consider when contracting a certifying body.**

**6 Months**

**Undertake initial planning and preparation.**

**Activities will include:**

* **setting the scene (leadership endorsement and building engagement)**
* **setting the scope (understanding the quality requirements and allocating resources)**
* **planning for action (preparing for change and developing quality action plans) and customer/client and stakeholder engagement.**

**18 months**

**Certification Due Date**

**Ensure that all outstanding issues have been actioned in order to achieve certification.**

**9 Months**

**Conduct a self-assessment to check your organisation’s compliance with the standards and identify gaps to make improvements.**

**Familiarise and use the HSQF User Guide - Certification to assist in this process. You will need to allocate resources, schedule timeframes and activities and develop a plan to complete the self-assessment.**

**The Continuous Improvement Cycle**

**After the Stage 1 audit, continue planning for the onsite (Stage 2) audit and implement any improvement actions identified in the Stage 1 audit.**



**Need more assistance?**

Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) website: [www.qcoss.org.au/sector-building/human-services-quality-framework-resources/](http://www.qcoss.org.au/sector-building/human-services-quality-framework-resources/)

**Resources**

HSQF website: [www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/human-services-quality-framework](http://www.dcssds.qld.gov.au/our-work/human-services-quality-framework)

**Continuous Improvement**