



HEIACert Certification Services

The Value of a Pre-assessment Visit

- a) The Client who applies for Certification has the option of having a pre-assessment prior to having their official assessment and shall not consider consulting at all.
- b) While it is an optional visit of the certification process, it has been shown to shorten the process by improving the Client's 'readiness for the official assessment.
- c) The new applicants seeking Certification that have not had a pre-assessment or previous extensive experience of certification assessments are often under-prepared for the official assessment.
- d) The Common problems for the applicant's include:
 - 1. Misunderstanding of some requirements within the standard and/or schemes,
 - 2. Missing requirements within the standard or incorrectly determining a requirement doesn't apply,
 - 3. Missing mandatory documents,
 - 4. A lack of implementation of processes and policies,
 - 5. Practice not matching documented policy and process.
- e) These problems can lead to increased cost and/or timeframe for gaining a Certification.
 - For example, misunderstanding the requirements of the standard can lead to the need for significant rework on the procedure. Operations not relating to documented procedures may require HEIACert to repeat some or all of the assessment in order to observe the activity and be in a position to assess its suitability.
- f) What is involved in a pre-assessment visit?
 - 1. During the visit, HEIACert carries out a review and assess your system in order to identify any significant gaps or misunderstandings and to determine that it is applied throughout the production site(s) and shows into everyday practices.
 - 2. The visit will also highlight any specific requirements that fall outside of the standard that may have been overlooked and identify areas where the production site(s) may have overcomplicated its implementation where a more efficient approach may be possible.
 - 3. It also provides the opportunity for discussion between HEIACert and the Client on the requirements of the standard, the assessment process, and best practice.
- g) **A pre-assessment visit does not guarantee that there will be no nonconformities raised at the official assessment or that the official assessment will have a positive recommendation.**

However, applicants that opt for a pre-assessment visit, and subsequently act upon the issues raised, are in a better position for the official assessment.