

# Self-Assessment & Awards

## Evaluation against the Excellence Model®

The criteria and sub-criteria of the Excellence Model® give a framework against which any organisation can measure itself and identify and examine any “gaps”, the so-called “gap analysis”. Such a process is known as “self-assessment”, and it can provide a ‘score’ for an organisation, and feedback, which highlights strengths and improvement opportunities. The score may be used to track progress and the feedback is a valuable input for driving continuous improvement.

Self-assessment may be conducted in many different ways. Assessment against the Model particularly, for award purposes, is performed using the RADAR® philosophy, which sits at the heart of the Model. RADAR® stands for:

**R**esults  
**A**pproach  
**D**eployment  
**A**ssessment  
**R**eview

Based on the simple ‘Plan – Do – Check - Act’ cycle, an organisation must:

- Determine the **Results** it is aiming for from its policy and strategy
- Plan and develop integrated **Approaches**
- **Deploy** the approaches
- **Assess** and **Review** these approaches, to identify, prioritise, plan and implement improvements

Assessing the enabler criteria asks the following questions:

- What is the approach in this area and is it appropriate?
- Does the approach support the organisation’s overall aims?
- How widely used is the approach?
- How is the approach reviewed?
- What improvements are undertaken following the review?

And assessing the results criteria addresses the following questions:

- What has the performance been over a period of time?
- How does the performance compare against internal targets and other organisations?
- Were the results caused by the approaches described in the enabler criteria?
- To what extent do the measures cover the range of the organisation’s or business area’s activities?

Assessment is normally a team activity with the team considering the organisation’s position against each of the sub-criteria. A score is assigned to each sub-criteria based on the response to the questions given above. The score is based on identified strengths and improvement opportunities.

Once the assessment is complete, an overall score is calculated; the maximum possibilities based on points out of 1000 points.

An organisation new to TQM and business excellence might score in the region of 200/300 points, whereas an award winner should score around 700 points.

## Approaches to self-assessment

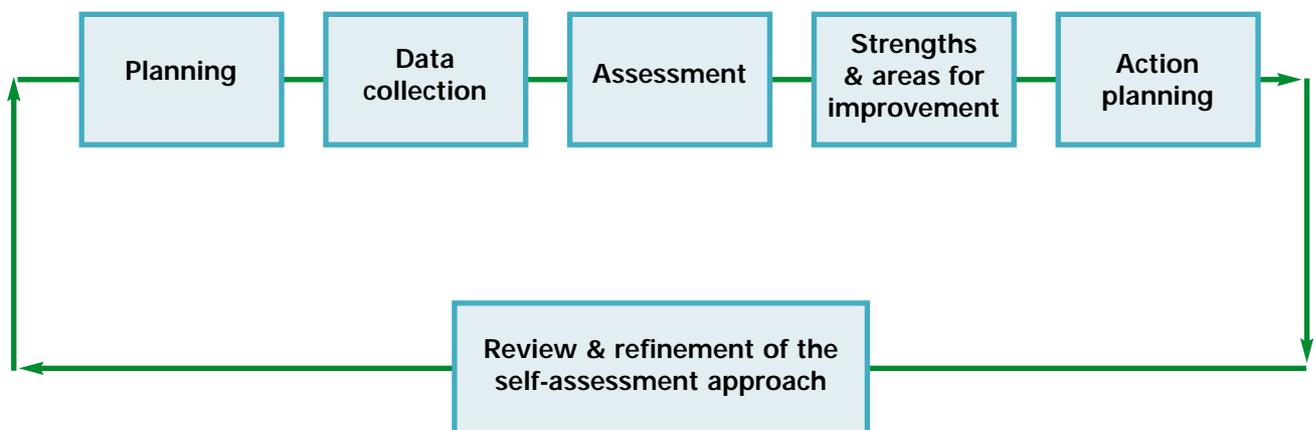
There are a number of approaches that can be used to carry out a self-assessment, including:

- Discussion group/workshop methods
- Surveys, questionnaires and interviews
- Pro formas
- Organisational self-analysis matrices
- An award simulation
- Activity or process audits
- Hybrid approaches of the above

Guidelines are published on self-assessment by the EFQM and BQF, but whichever method is used, the emphasis should be on understanding the organisation's strengths and areas for improvement, rather than achieving a score. Self-assessment provides an organisation with vital information in monitoring its progress towards its goals and business excellence, and it can be conducted at several stages in an organisation's history:

- Before starting an improvement programme, possibly in parallel with a "cost of quality" exercise
- As part of a programme launch
- Every one or two years to steer and monitor progress

The general steps involved in under-taking a self-assessment, whichever method is used and whenever it is done in an organisation's history, are represented as:



The first step is to plan the activity, including which self-assessment methodology to use and the number of people who will be involved.

The method for collecting the data may vary from getting a team together in a room and asking them what they think, to conducting a detailed analysis. Once the data is collected it has to be assessed, and this will depend on the way it was collected.

A major outcome of the self-assessment will be the identification of strengths and areas for improvement, leading to action planning.

## Business Excellence Awards

Organisations can gauge their achievements in business excellence by applying for one of the many quality awards that exist around the world. The early awards include the Deming Prize, which originated in Japan in 1951, but may be given to any company worldwide, and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA), started in 1987 in the USA. These awards continue to generate great interest and provide role models throughout the world.

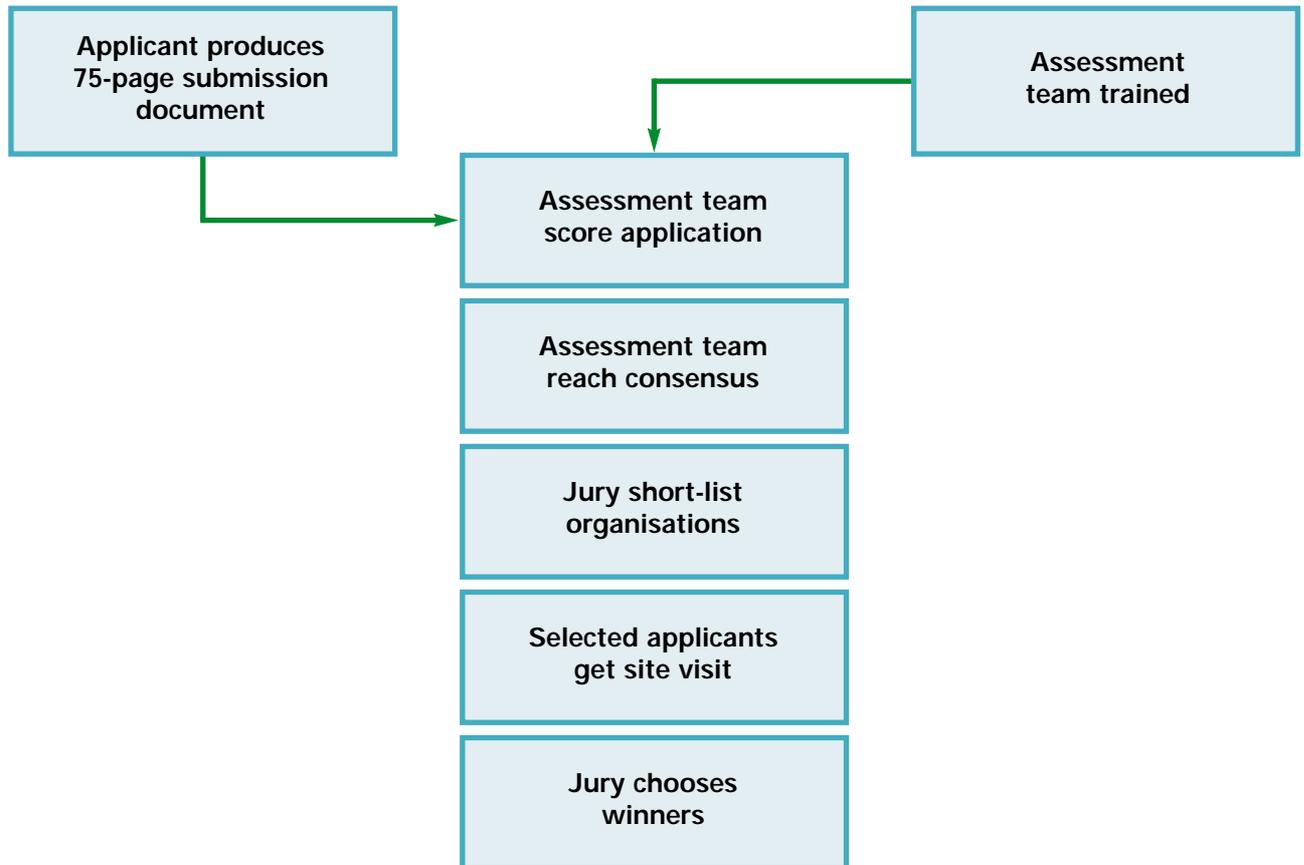
In Europe, there is the EFQM's Quality Award, based on the Excellence Model®, and in the UK, the UK Business Excellence Award and regional Excellence Awards, e.g. the Midlands Excellence Award. All are based on the same framework as the European Award.

A primary motive for applying for an award is to compare progress against other organisations and not just to win an award. The detailed feedback received is a highly valuable benefit to organisations, but it is not necessary to apply for an award to get these benefits, as they should be achieved by conducting a good self-assessment.

Organisations achieving a UK Business Excellence Award have been subjected to rigorous process lasting over 9 months. As the process is so systematic and reliable, organisations approaching world-class performance often subscribe to it for self-assessment purposes, to receive an accurate score and detailed feedback.

Identical to the approach used for the European Quality Award, the BOF process involves many people - the applicant, the assessment team and the jury.

An overview of the process follows:



In the process, the applicant produces a 75-page maximum submission document detailing the approaches and results, against the criteria of the Excellence Model® the assessment teams undertake training to 'calibrate' themselves against each other. Teams are then assigned to applications and every member of the team individually assesses the application. The team then meets to reach consensus on the strengths, areas for improvement and to reach an agreed score reflecting the applicant's achievement.

The jury meets to compare the results from all the applications assessed. From these a number are chosen to move to the next stage where the assessment team visits the applicant to verify the evidence presented in the submission and to clarify any points that are not clear.

A revised report is presented to the members of the jury, who choose which companies to recognise. There is no limit on the number of awards given in any year but a certain level of performance has to be achieved to receive an award. There are two categories of award:

- Small organisations with up to 250 employees
- Organisations above 250 employees