

# Writing a great Quality in Care entry: Seven steps to success

Writing a strong submission takes planning and time, and it is worth doing both if you want your entry to shine through. It must stand out from the rest as improving patient outcomes and experience.

Following these seven steps should ensure that your entry wows the judges

## 1. Summary

First impressions count; be clear, concise and impactful. Although this section is first on the entry form, it is often best to leave until last: distil the main points of your entry and compel the judges to read on.

## 2. Word count, format and layout

Stick to the stated word count for each section. The judges read lots of entries. Make sure it is legible. Keep it simple: 11 point font for body text and 8 point font for tables (minimum). Each entry is photocopied so don't use tints or coloured boxes. The judges are looking for stand-out programmes that have improved patient outcomes not creative layouts!

## 3. The brief

Stick to the brief - don't be tempted to go off piste. Your entry is being judged against specific category criteria; irrelevant information won't gain you any more marks. Make sure that you complete all sections in full. Keep a careful balance between content and data. In some cases a table might be more effective than narrative.



## 4. Aims and objectives

You **MUST** detail your aims and objectives. Your objectives must be **SMARTER** - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Evaluated and Reviewed. There are a few questions that will help you stick to this.

- Where are we now (situation)?
- Where do we want to be (objectives)?
- How are we going to get there (strategy)?
- What needs to be done and by who?
- Did we achieve our objectives?

## 5. Evaluation

This is vital. Do not underestimate the importance of evaluating your initiative. It is crucial and is the difference between making the finalist cut and not. It is the only way the judges can determine if your programme was successful. Your evaluation should include not just percentage increases or decreases but whole numbers, so judges can see how many patients were positively impacted by your initiative.

## 6. Sense check

Get a colleague who knows nothing about the initiative to read over your entry - this is the best way to ensure that your submission is clear, makes sense and that you haven't missed something that might seem obvious to you, but may not be obvious to the judges.

## 7. Supporting materials

Make sure that your supporting materials do just that, 'support' your entry. They should be relevant and provide further, additional information adding clarity to your submission.

- Do not attach supporting materials to your entry form
- Materials should be accompanied by a covering list
- Judges see standard print outs. If you have professionally created materials consider posting them
- If you reference websites/online systems, please include all access codes and passwords.

## Previously entered?

Please attach any clearly marked previous entries for this initiative and the year that it was entered (mandatory)

If you have any queries or need further advice on completing or submitting your entry, please contact one of the Quality in Care team. And good luck!

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