

**Midlands Excellence Awards programme 2010/11**

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# **Submission Manual**

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO TAKING PART IN ONE OF EUROPE'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS AWARDS PROGRAMMES.

# About the Midlands Excellence Awards Programme

The Midlands Excellence Awards is one of the most prestigious regional awards programmes in Europe.

Open to private, public and voluntary sector organisations of all sizes, the programme provides a rigorous and cost effective assessment of performance in nine key areas ranging from customer satisfaction to people management, leadership, processes and impact on society. This identifies opportunities to improve and achieve better results.

You will see your organisation in a new light by compiling a submission to provide evidence of your activities and results against a blueprint for excellence – the framework of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model, also known as the Business Excellence Model.

Submissions are then assessed by independent teams that have been specially trained by Midlands Excellence, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping organisations improve their performance.

Each assessment team uses the Excellence Model framework to highlight strengths, identify opportunities for improvement and determine a score. The results of the assessors' work, which includes a site visit, is provided in a comprehensive feedback report.

Winners and finalists are recognised at the spectacular and high-profile Midlands Excellence Awards Ceremony attended by over 1000 business leaders at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Birmingham. Our next ceremony takes place on February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011.

## Why you should enter – a summary

- Award winners are recognised as exemplars of excellence and stand to benefit from significant PR and business opportunities.
- The cost-effective and rigorous programme will help any organisation to improve performance and achieve better results.
- You will see your organisation in a new light and obtain a thorough understanding of what drives the success of your organisation.
- An opportunity to benchmark your performance against the world-class practices identified by the EFQM Excellence Model.
- You will also gain from the views of an independent team, which will assess your application and compile a comprehensive feedback report highlighting strengths and opportunities for improvement, together with an EFQM score.
- Finalists and winners may use our special awards logos on their stationery and in promotional activity.



## Private, public and voluntary categories

Organisations are invited to enter one of six equal-status award categories:

- Large companies with more than 250 employees
- Medium sized companies with 51 to 250 employees
- Small companies with up to 50 employees
- Operational units of large companies - typically these have the following characteristics:
  - not recognised separately in the organisation's annual report,
  - run as a cost centre,
  - less than 50 per cent of services are provided to external customers,
  - the unit has a limited set of organisational functions.
- Public and voluntary sector organisations with more than 250 employees
- Public and voluntary sector organisations with up to 250 employees

Please note that the jury could decide not to present a main award in a particular category (even though finalists have been selected) and instead may choose to present a highly commended trophy.

## Most Improved Organisation Award

Entrants will be eligible for a special award for **The Most Improved Organisation**, presented to the applicant that has made the most progress against the EFQM Excellence Model since making a previous Midlands Excellence Awards entry.

## Eligibility

Organisations entering the awards must be a private, public or voluntary organisation based wholly or in part in the Midlands.

Normally, only three operational units may apply from any one private or public sector organisation. However, Midlands Excellence may be able to accommodate further units if sufficient resources are available. Further advice may be obtained from the Midlands Excellence office.

All finalists and award winners must consent to participate in Midlands Excellence PR activities relating to the awards.

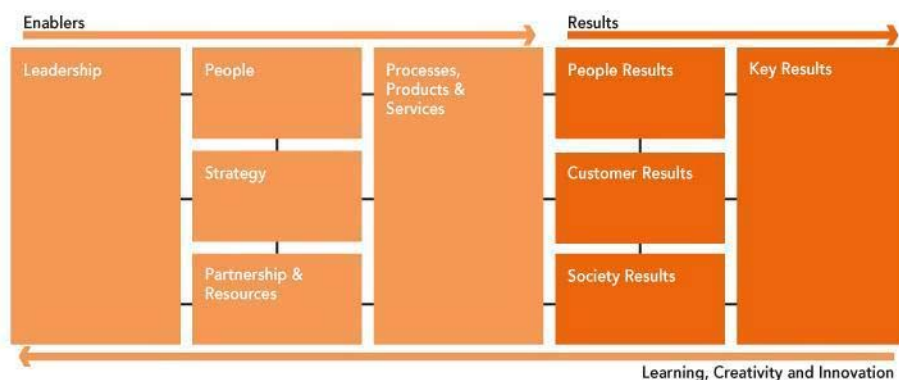
Winners of Midlands Excellence Awards are unable to re-apply for a period of three years. (i.e. an award winner in 2010/11 would be eligible to enter again in 2014/15.) However, Midlands Excellence is still able to provide external assessments during this period.



# The assessment process

## About the EFQM Excellence Model

The assessment is based on the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model also known as the Business Excellence Model.



The Excellence Model (left) has nine main indicators which all fall into two broad areas; Enablers and Results.

**Enablers** show *how* the results are achieved.

**Results** show exactly *what* the organisation has achieved.

Further guidance about how to present submissions is provided through a 'Preparing for external assessment' workshop, which is free to all applicants.

It is likely that awards entrants will have previous knowledge of using the Excellence Model. If your organisation does not have this experience, we strongly recommend that you consider progression towards the Investors in Excellence Standard as your first course of action. Details of the Investors in Excellence Standard are available from Midlands Excellence.

## About the assessment

Applicants are assessed by teams of specially trained Midlands Excellence assessors, most of whom are experienced managers drawn from a wide range of organisations throughout the region. Each team is led by an experienced senior assessor.

The number of assessors in each team will depend on the size and complexity of the applicant organisation, but typically there are four to six in a team.

Entrants will be assessed for strengths and areas for improvement against the EFQM Excellence Model. Having evaluated the submission individually, all team members meet as a team to reach an initial consensus and score.

The site visit enables the team to check the validity of the submission and to clarify any issues arising from the team's initial assessment. A site visit will typically be completed in one day, although it may be agreed that separate sites can be covered on different days.

Final consensus reports are then completed and returned to Midlands Excellence for a jury meeting to determine the award finalists and winners in each category.

Each applicant will receive a comprehensive feedback report and a score on a scale of 0-1000 points.

# Preparing your entry

Your entry should explain your organisation's performance against each of the sections of the EFQM Excellence Model.

The guide to the EFQM Excellence Model is issued free to those attending the Preparing for External Assessment workshops run by Midlands Excellence. Alternatively, copies of the guide can be purchased from Midlands Excellence at a cost of £30+VAT each.

## Submission formats

Midlands Excellence accepts two submission formats, the **embedded format** and the **appended format**. Both formats are submitted in hard-copy. The key difference between the formats is in the presentation of results data. In the embedded format the results data is embedded into the narrative, in the appended format the results data is appended at the end of the submission.

Examples of the two formats are available and will be issued on receipt of your intention to apply. If you have any queries please contact Louise Jones or Jo Dowdall on 01675 460 997.

### Embedded format

The submission document should take the following form:

- Maximum 100 A4 sides presented in a four-ring binder. Included within the 100 sides should be:
  - A glossary.
  - Organisational overview, including - organisation history, organisation chart, principal products and services, business environment, regulatory environment, key products/service quality factors and other important issues. The overview is unlikely to be more than two sides.
  - Your organisation's performance against each of the enablers and results sections of the EFQM Excellence Model.
  - Results data, e.g. excel charts and tables should be embedded into the document. Results data should be referenced within the narrative using EFQM criterion numbering e.g. 7.b.1, 7.b.2.
- For assessment purposes the submission document needs only to be clear and readable, it does not need to be professionally published. We encourage you to spend your time and resources on the content rather than perfecting the look of the document.
- No less than 12 point font to be used throughout, including any captions used for photographs, charts etc.
- We encourage applicants to divide the pages of the submission into two columns. The two column format enhances readability and makes incorporation of items such as charts and photographs easier.
- Double or single sided printing is allowed.
- Dividers may be used to separate the various sections – these are not included in the 100 sides. Any information on the dividers will not be assessed.
- All pages **MUST** be numbered

## Appended format

The submission document should take the following form:

- Maximum 80 A4 sides presented in a four-ring binder. Included within the 80 sides should be:
  - A glossary.
  - Organisational overview, including - organisation history, organisation chart, principal products and services, business environment, regulatory environment, key products/service quality factors and other important issues. The overview is unlikely to be more than two sides.
  - Your organisation's performance against each of the enablers and results sections of the EFQM Excellence Model.
  - Any photographs and diagrams used within the enabler section of the submission should be embedded.
- Results data (limited to 100 items) should be appended as hard-copy at the end of the submission. The following applies:
  - All items of results data should have corresponding explanatory narrative included within the 80 sides. EFQM criterion numbering should be used, e.g. 7.b.1, 7.b.2. to reference the data items.
  - Explanatory narrative should not be included within the appended results.
  - The number of items of results data that can be appended is limited to 100. Items that are likely to be appended include excel charts and tables. A single chart or table counts as *one* item, for example, if five charts are used to show the results of a customer satisfaction questionnaire they would count as *five* items.
  - Results data can be presented as an item per page side or several items per side. (The 100 item limit refers to the physical number of items and not the number of sides.)
- For assessment purposes the submission document needs only to be clear and readable, it does not need to be professionally published. We encourage you to spend your time and resources on the content rather than perfecting the look of the document.
- No less than 12 point font to be used throughout, including any captions used for photographs, charts etc.
- We encourage applicants to divide the pages of the submission into two columns. The two column format enhances readability and where appropriate makes the incorporation of items such as photographs easier.
- Double or single sided printing is allowed.
- Dividers may be used to separate the various sections – these are not included in the 80 sides. Any information on the dividers will not be assessed.
- All pages MUST be numbered.

## Assistance in preparing your submission

Midlands Excellence is keen that you present your organisation in the best light. To make the preparation of your submission document as smooth as possible we are able to provide the following assistance.

- A no-charge preparing for external assessment workshop. We would urge you to attend this workshop as it covers not only the submission format but also provides a valuable insight into the assessment process.
- A blank submission template pre-filled with EFQM model criteria.
- Applicants' handbook.

Midlands Excellence is also able to provide contact details of third parties who can help prepare your award submission.

## Material to be sent to Midlands Excellence

### Hard copies

We will require sufficient hard copies of your entry for each assessor in your assessment team, together with one copy for our files. You will be informed in advance about the number of copies required.

### Electronic back-up copy

We will require a single electronic back-up copy of your entry. The electronic copy should be saved onto a CD either in a PDF format or read-only format in Microsoft Word. Where applicants have opted for the *appended format* it is necessary to attach electronic versions of any results data.

# Key dates

## 2010

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|--|--|
| <b>March 15th</b>  | Deadline for registering your organisation's intention to apply. This is necessary to give us time to recruit and train the team to assess your submission. Please contact Midlands Excellence if you are unable to meet this timescale. |
| <b>February 24<sup>th</sup> &amp; March 1<sup>st</sup></b> | Free workshops 'Preparing for external assessment'.  |
| <b>July 29<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon</b>                       | Deadline for receipt of submissions. If you are in any doubt about meeting this deadline please contact Midlands Excellence.   |
| <b>October</b>   | A one day site visit will take place during this period. Please note that members of your management team are expected to be present. The date is set by mutual agreement between the assessment team and applicant.                     |
| <b>w/c November 29<sup>th</sup></b>                        | Finalists announced and all feedback reports issued. Scores for finalists will be issued following the awards ceremony.  |
| <b>January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011</b>                       | Feedback meetings with senior assessors to be completed by this date.  |

## 2011

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>February 3<sup>rd</sup></b>     | Midlands Excellence Awards Ceremony - The ICC, Birmingham. |
| <b>w/c February 7<sup>th</sup></b> | Scores issued to finalists.                                |

# Costs

|                                       |                     |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Organisations with up to 50 employees | <b>£975 + VAT</b>   |
| 51-250 employees                      | <b>£1,475 + VAT</b> |
| >250 employees                        | <b>£1,975 + VAT</b> |

Includes a one day 'Preparing for Assessment workshop for one or two delegates and access to an individual 'surgery' session.

All first-time applicants will qualify for a guidance meeting with an experienced practitioner 1 month before the submission deadline.

Applicants are not expected to bear the costs of our assessors who cover their own expenses and do not charge for their time.

# Confidentiality

Names of applicants, award submissions and individual scoring information developed during the reviews of your entry are kept strictly confidential by Midlands Excellence. Such information is available only to the assessors who have signed confidentiality agreements. Midlands Excellence will take all reasonable action to ensure that applications and the information contained therein are treated in strictest confidence. However, Midlands Excellence cannot be held responsible for any loss of confidentiality or be held liable for any damage (to goods, persons, financial or consequential) incurred howsoever caused through a breach of confidentiality or otherwise by the applicants or by any third party.

## Next steps

All applicants must complete an intention to apply form, which is available from Midlands Excellence. This form can also be downloaded from the library section of the Midlands Excellence website – [www.midlandsexcellence.org.uk](http://www.midlandsexcellence.org.uk)

## Further information

If any further information is required please contact Louise Jones at Midlands Excellence.

**T** 01675 460997  
**F** 01675 460472  
**E** [louise.jones@midlandsexcellence.org.uk](mailto:louise.jones@midlandsexcellence.org.uk)

*The Midlands Excellence Awards are administered by Investors in Excellence Limited.*