Key Factors Fact Sheet

Key factors are significant attributes of an organization that influence the way the organization operates.

Examiners use key factors to

- Provide more accurate and meaningful feedback to the applicant.
- Understand the areas of the Criteria that are of greatest importance to the applicant.
- Understand the key points to investigate during the consensus and site visit stages of the award process.

Judges use key factors to

- Quickly acquaint themselves with the applicant.
- Focus on what is most important.

Examples of key factors

- mission, vision and values
- core competencies
- employee/staff profile
- governance system
- governance structure
- customer and market segments and customer requirements
- competitive position
- strategic challenges/strategic advantages

Key factors can be found in several places

- Most will be found in the Organizational Profile.
- A few will be found in the responses to the Criteria items.
- A few may be found in the Intent to Apply form.
- It is important that examiners consider key factors wherever they are found in the application.

Key factor format essentials

- The purpose of key factors is to give a concise summary of the most important aspects of the applicant's organizational environment. Each key factor describes a significant fact about or aspect of the applicant, such as environment, key working relationships, and strategic challenges.
- Enter the key factors into one of five areas to address outlined in the Organizational Profile:
  - Organizational Environment
  - Organizational Relationships
  - Competitive Environment
  - Strategic Context
  - Performance Improvement System
- Use phrases rather than complete sentences.
- Do not cut and paste the entire Organizational Profile into a key factors list. Use discretion.
- Revise your list of key factors throughout the evaluation process as additional information and insights are gained during the consensus and site visit stages.

Key factors and independent review

As you begin independent review for each item, you will be asked to enter the key factors that are relevant to that item:

- Consider which key factors would impact individual item requirements.
- Ask yourself: "will it make a difference in my assessment of this item?"
- Identify the 4-6 key factors that are most relevant for each item – these will be a subset of your complete list of key factors.
- Select these from the drop-down menu on each item from the IR Worksheets screen using the "Relevant Key Factor" panel in BOSS.