

# 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 the online Examiner software (i.e. Scorebook Navigator, BOSS).