

next steps in **quality**

**PQASSO<sup>®</sup>**

**in**

**practice**

## **First steps series**

**First Steps in Quality** (2nd edition)

**First Steps in Monitoring and Evaluation**

## **Next steps series**

**PQASSO in Practice** (2nd edition)

**Monitoring and Evaluation on a Shoestring**

# PQASSO in practice

Charities Evaluation Services (CES) has worked since 1990 with a wide variety of voluntary and community organisations and their funders, providing training, advice and support to promote quality and accessible monitoring and evaluation practice.

If you have any queries about implementing a quality system in your organisation or project, you can get free advice from CES.

Phone 020 7713 5722 or email [enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk)

## PQASSO in practice

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# introduction

People who use services provided by third sector organisations, and the general public, expect high standards and quality services. Third sector organisations themselves want to show that they are working to high standards, and there is more and more demand for guidance on how to improve what they are doing.

A severely restricted and highly competitive funding climate means that third sector organisations are likely to have to prove that their performance is of a high quality both in the way they do things and in the results they achieve. They may also have to show how they perform in comparison to others and that their quality has been objectively verified by achieving an externally assessed award.

Increasing numbers of third sector organisations are demonstrating their quality to the outside world by working with comprehensive quality management systems or standards. The standards describe important elements of an effective and efficient organisation necessary to achieve high-quality products and services. The standards chosen will depend on the needs and characteristics of each individual organisation.

PQASSO has been designed specifically for use within third sector organisations. It is the leading set of quality standards in use in the third sector, with over 14,000 copies of the workpack in circulation. The PQASSO Quality Mark is the externally assessed award for PQASSO and is available for all organisations working with PQASSO.

PQASSO is suitable for organisations of all sizes, including those with a policy, campaigning, economic or environmental purpose, as well as for those providing facilities and services.

Since 1997, CES has developed PQASSO to reflect changing organisational needs and public expectations of the sector. This 3rd edition incorporates a strong focus on good governance and leadership, user involvement and evidence of sound financial results, outcomes for users and wider impacts.

Organisations that achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark at levels 2 and 3 of the 3rd edition of PQASSO will also receive Charity Commission endorsement confirming that they meet the Hallmarks of an Effective Charity.

# this booklet

**PQASSO in Practice** is written for Board members, staff and volunteers in third sector organisations who are in the process of introducing PQASSO to their organisation, or considering doing so.

It is intended to help all those involved in and concerned with quality in your organisation to become more familiar with PQASSO and what it entails, and to help you get the best out of it.

**Chapter 1** provides an overview of PQASSO.

**Chapter 2** introduces the 12 quality areas and the three levels of achievement.

**Chapter 3** describes the self-assessment process, which is the essence of how PQASSO works.

**Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5** describe the key elements involved in successfully getting started and keeping going with PQASSO.

**Chapter 6** introduces and outlines the process for achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark.

**Chapter 7** tells you about resources you may find helpful in implementing PQASSO.

## Chapter 1

# introducing PQASSO

This chapter gives an overview of what PQASSO is, who it's for, what it involves, and how it benefits organisations.

### What is PQASSO?

PQASSO is a straightforward, user-friendly and comprehensive set of quality standards intended to help you to run your organisation more effectively and efficiently.

Designed as a workpack, it is simple to use and is written in plain English. It offers a flexible approach to quality improvement, allowing your organisation to work at its own pace. It aims to help you to set priorities for the future and to improve your organisation's performance.

PQASSO's 12 quality standards are described on pages 14-15.

PQASSO covers 12 quality standards and three levels of achievement and promotes continuous improvement through a process of self-assessment. It helps you to take a systematic look at what you do and what results you achieve, and to decide exactly where improvements are needed. It helps you to plan, budget and allocate the necessary resources for making these improvements over a realistic time period.

Organisations can also apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark, the nationally recognised award that demonstrates that an organisation has been externally assessed and has achieved the PQASSO quality standards at a particular level. Being able to prove that your organisation is well run, well managed and committed to providing effective services is important when applying for funding and tendering for contracts, and offers a genuine reassurance of quality for those using your services.

### What type of organisations use PQASSO?

PQASSO was written specifically for use by third sector organisations, and supports the third sector's focus on mission. It is written in the language of the third sector and addresses all relevant elements of being a third sector organisation, including good governance, user involvement and a focus on outcomes and impact.

The PQASSO standards are generic. They relate to the things which are common to all organisations, whatever the nature of their activities. Organisations working in many different fields use PQASSO. This includes those with a policy, campaigning, economic or environmental purpose as well as organisations providing facilities and services.

PQASSO 3<sup>rd</sup> edition was written for use by organisations of all sizes, from small local community groups through to multi-site national organisations. Current PQASSO users range from very small organisations with just one employee to national charities

employing over 2,000 staff and working with 5,000 volunteers. PQASSO is also used by organisations with no paid staff and by social enterprises.

The characteristics of the organisation and its stage of development are important in determining whether PQASSO is the best approach to adopt. It is worth spending some time thinking through why you want to use quality standards, and making sure that, of the available approaches, this is the one that is the best fit for your organisation.

PQASSO's flexibility and versatility, and its emphasis on self-assessment, have led to it being used in different ways. Some organisations use it as a reference tool, to be consulted when an organisation or its services are growing or developing; others use specific quality areas as a one-off 'health check'. Some organisations use PQASSO only as a self-assessment tool, while others use it as a basis for achieving the externally assessed PQASSO Quality Mark. Some larger organisations have chosen to implement PQASSO only in certain projects or in certain functions of their wider organisations. But for many, PQASSO serves as a thorough approach to quality, and as a guide to continuously developing and improving their organisation as a whole.

## What will implementing PQASSO involve?

PQASSO uses a self-assessment approach. This involves people within your organisation making a judgement about your organisation's performance against the PQASSO standards and indicators, identifying what is being done well (your strengths) and deciding what needs to be improved (your areas for improvement). Next, you work towards an action plan to build on your good practice and to address the areas for improvement. You then have the option of applying for the externally assessed PQASSO Quality Mark.

There is more about indicators on page 13.

The PQASSO Quality Mark is explained in Chapter 6.

## How long will it take to implement PQASSO?

Using PQASSO is a form of quality management. Quality management is about continuously improving how you do things. It is also about making your organisation adaptable and able to respond to your users' changing needs and to external developments. So it's not a 'one-off process'.

PQASSO offers a flexible, staged approach to implementing quality. The length of time needed to achieve the different levels of PQASSO through self-assessment will depend on each organisation and there are many factors that might vary, making it difficult to suggest a standard timeframe. But focusing on working to one level at a time means that you can set realistic plans and achieve improvements within a defined time period.

Here are just four factors to take into account when deciding how long it will take you to work through PQASSO:

- gaining the necessary commitment from the key people within your organisation and the level of this commitment
- your level of resources, including staff time
- how much good practice you already have in place
- how long it takes to get things done in your organisation.

There is more about the resources needed for implementing PQASSO on page 34.

One of PQASSO's aims is to improve management and efficiency. This is likely to involve some additional activities in the short term, but PQASSO's flexibility means that you will be in control of how and when you do the work. We recommend that you allow a realistic timeframe for implementation, allocating appropriate resources to it. Over time, PQASSO should develop into a fundamental part of the way the organisation operates, rather than as a source of additional work.

It is important to remember that implementing quality within an organisation should not be rushed. A steady and continuous approach to implementing quality will result in meaningful changes.

## Values and principles

**'Using PQASSO has enabled this organisation to dramatically improve its own management and the delivery of its services.'**  
The Octobus Project

PQASSO has been designed for organisations and people that are motivated by strong values. Quality and continuous improvement have a particular importance in the third sector, which is distinguished by its variety, independence, conscience and drive to change things for the better. PQASSO seeks to reflect those third sector values while also offering practical tools to help organisations to improve what they do.

The principles and values that are central to PQASSO are:

- putting users at the heart of the organisation
- valuing staff and volunteers
- equal opportunities and valuing diversity
- environment and ethical responsibility
- effective communication
- being a learning organisation.

Working with PQASSO will mean having a commitment to these values.

## PQASSO and funders

In this booklet, the term 'funders' means any organisation or body which provides financial resources to support third sector organisations, including public sector commissioners.

PQASSO is the leading set of quality standards, designed specifically for use within third sector organisations. It is well known throughout the whole of the UK third sector and is becoming increasingly well known internationally as well. PQASSO is already recognised by many funders in the UK, and CES is continually striving to increase understanding of PQASSO among those funders and commissioners who may be less aware of it. Many funders have endorsed the use of PQASSO after being introduced to it by enthusiastic PQASSO users.

In an economic environment where funding sources are strained, funders and commissioners are becoming increasingly interested in quality standards as a way of demonstrating that their money is being used efficiently and effectively to produce the best outcomes for users. For example, organisations tendering for public sector contracts are usually asked to show that they have achieved a recognised quality standard.

Some funders who recognise PQASSO may ask you to demonstrate that you have met the standards through the externally assessed PQASSO Quality Mark, while others may be satisfied with evidence that you are using PQASSO as a self-assessment tool.

While it is important to consider the wishes of funding agencies when making decisions about which quality standards to use and how to implement them, remember that PQASSO is designed to fit around your own organisational needs and timeframes rather than those of any external agency. CES would encourage you to enter into a dialogue with your supporters about how PQASSO can be used to satisfy both your internal organisational needs and the legal or administrative requirements of your funders and commissioners.

## How PQASSO links with other approaches to quality

PQASSO complements the use of other quality approaches. It takes a ‘holistic’ approach – that is, it considers all aspects of the organisation – whereas some other approaches to quality look at certain aspects only, such as human resources or customer service.

Level 3, the highest level of PQASSO, makes links to the EFQM Excellence Model and its emphasis on continuous improvement.

It is important to remember that any previous work you have done with other quality standards or performance improvement initiatives, whether using off-the-shelf standards or your organisation’s own tailored approach, will not be wasted if you then start to implement PQASSO. On the contrary, it will be of benefit. For example, Investors in People will have laid good foundations for your work on PQASSO, particularly in quality area 1, *Planning*, quality area 5, *Managing people* and quality area 6, *Learning and development*. Any work you have done and evidence you have collected and generated to meet other standards can be used when carrying out self-assessments using PQASSO.

Similarly, any work you do in implementing PQASSO may help you if your organisation goes on to use a different quality standard later.

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model is not a quality standard as such, but provides an over-arching self-assessment framework for continuous improvement.

Investors in People (IIP) is an externally assessed standard that aims to improve an organisation through the performance of its people. It has a particular focus on managing and supporting staff.

## Benefits of using PQASSO

Working with PQASSO relies on everyone involved being committed to making the necessary changes. A part of gaining that commitment involves stakeholders – those people within the organisation and outside who have an interest in the organisation – understanding its benefits. Below are some of the many and varied benefits of working together using PQASSO.

### Finding it easier to define and agree the organisation’s purpose and its activities

Organisations using PQASSO have a framework for establishing their mission and aims. This should help them to be more effective at planning and to have more effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

### **More effective and efficient organisational systems and procedures**

PQASSO users report improvements in management systems, which in turn support efficient working. They become better organised and better at coordinating their efforts.

### **Better quality of services for users**

Using PQASSO encourages the involvement of service users and improved opportunities for providing user feedback, which can result in better services. PQASSO also supports a focus on planning, achieving and monitoring outcomes for users.

### **Better communication and motivation among staff, Board members and volunteers**

PQASSO supports good two-way communication with the Board, and between managers and other staff and volunteers. The process of working with PQASSO brings people together to identify areas for improvement, and will encourage effective team work. Achievement of the nationally recognised PQASSO Quality Mark can be particularly motivating for staff and volunteers.

### **More creative thinking, enabling new perspectives and ways of working**

PQASSO is particularly suited to encouraging discussion and reflection by staff members, Board members and volunteers about the organisation, its activities and services, and the results it achieves. It encourages people to challenge established ways of working and can motivate people to make visible progress.

### **Continuous improvement over time**

Organisations working with PQASSO follow a 'plan → do → review' cycle as they work through the different quality areas and the different levels, according to the needs of the organisation and its users. The PQASSO Quality Mark provides external verification of attainment of the standards at each level.

### **Greater recognition and credibility from statutory and independent funders, users and other stakeholders**

PQASSO offers all organisations a useful tool for demonstrating the quality of the organisation to funders and other stakeholders, through self-assessment against established and agreed standards of good practice. The PQASSO Quality Mark provides an external assessment, adding an additional layer of credibility. Holders of the PQASSO Quality Mark have reported that it has helped them to win contracts and access funding. The Charity Commission has endorsed the PQASSO Quality Mark at level 2 and level 3 of PQASSO 3<sup>rd</sup> edition.

In the PQASSO workpack, for each of the PQASSO quality areas, you will find a brief description of the benefits of working to the standard.

**'The process was easy to follow and very user-friendly – a good opportunity to systematically review all our processes. It was a good exercise for staff and volunteers and gave us the opportunity to prove to funders that we assess and evaluate our services.'**

Ryedale Special Families

## Pre-school Learning Alliance Hammersmith and Fulham: positive outcomes

The Pre-school Learning Alliance Hammersmith and Fulham (PLAHF), a branch of the national Pre-school Learning Alliance, provides pre-school services for people in deprived areas of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

Initially, PLAHF had no choice but to implement PQASSO level 1, as this was required by the local authority service level agreement. However, once the organisation had achieved level 1, with the assistance of a CES PQASSO mentor, they moved on to levels 2 and 3, because the following unexpected positive outcomes had become evident:

- **Greater efficiency** – Implementing PQASSO made the organisation more efficient, as staff knew exactly where to find reports, policies and other important documents.
- **Reassurance** – They knew that they were doing lots of things very well, which was good for morale.
- **Improvement** – The process identified weaker areas and enabled the organisation to improve them.
- **External credibility** – It was useful to be able to tell funders and other key stakeholders that the organisation was a well-structured one, having met the standards laid out in PQASSO.

There is more about CES licensed mentors on page 46.

This chapter has set out how PQASSO's flexibility makes it appropriate for all sizes and types of organisations. The self-assessment approach allows you to implement a quality system that fits with your needs and priorities. Particularly important in this is how you work across the quality areas and different levels of attainment, described in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2

# the PQASSO quality areas and levels of achievement

This chapter introduces the 12 quality areas covered by PQASSO and the three levels of achievement, which are important elements in the system’s flexibility and relevance to organisations of different sizes, types and stages of development.

### The PQASSO format

PQASSO is built on 12 topics or quality areas. The first 11 quality areas address the things you need to do to improve the way your organisation is run and the quality of services for users. Quality area 12 is about the results you achieve for your users, for your organisation and its people, and for the wider community. (See page 14 for a list of the 12 quality areas.)

In each quality area, the standard itself is clearly defined. The standard is a statement of good practice applicable to all organisations. See the example for quality area 8, *Managing resources*, below.

#### Quality area 8: **Managing resources – the standard**

Resources are managed, ensuring that there are enough to support planned activities, and are used safely, efficiently and effectively. The organisation adopts ethical and sustainable working practices, and manages resources in ways which minimise any negative impact on the environment.

Beneath each standard, PQASSO outlines some of the benefits to be gained from working on the standard. It then sets out what the standard covers, defining and expanding on some of the key words and phrases used in the standard.

PQASSO sets out a number of indicators for each quality area, arranged in three levels. Indicators are more specific elements or ‘building blocks’ that make up the standard and against which a judgement can be made about whether a standard has been met. Examples of two indicators for quality area 8 at level 1 are shown below.

### Quality area 8: **Managing resources – indicators**

- Personal and sensitive information is held securely and managed in accordance with data protection legislation, ensuring confidentiality where appropriate.
- The organisation considers its environmental responsibilities, and takes steps to save energy, reduce waste, re-use or recycle materials, and shop ethically.

Careful discussion about indicators such as these is at the heart of the self-assessment approach. They should act as a stimulus for you to think through how well your organisation is doing and how you could do better.

Indicators are also used as the basis for assessment for the PQASSO Quality Mark.

Opposite each indicator, PQASSO sets out suggestions for sources of evidence that the indicator is met. However, it's important to remember that these are only suggestions. You should always look for evidence that is appropriate for the way things work in your organisation. Evidence that your organisation is meeting the indicator may be found in some of the documents suggested by PQASSO, or in other documents used in your organisation, or simply by thinking about what happens in practice.

Organisations applying for the PQASSO Quality Mark are not required to have all the documents listed under sources of evidence, but they are required to provide sufficient appropriate evidence to show that they meet the indicator.

The next two pages describe each of the PQASSO quality areas.

## The PQASSO quality areas

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### Quality area 1: **Planning**

Having a clear overall purpose and planning ahead are essential for any sound organisation. This quality area is about defining your mission, aims and values, based on understanding what your users and other stakeholders need. You then plan what you will do and agree outcomes, set targets, and systematically review progress. Where relevant, you involve users.

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### Quality area 2 : **Governance**

Board members have overall legal responsibility for the organisation. This quality area is about how the Board provides the strategic direction for the organisation, how it ensures the organisation meets all legal requirements and is governed effectively, and how the Board is accountable to its stakeholders. The Board reviews its practices, ensuring it has the right skills and experience.

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### Quality area 3: **Leadership and management**

Organisational leaders provide inspiration and direction, both internally and externally. Managers are responsible for planning and organising resources, and supporting people to get the results the organisation wants. This includes responsibilities for legal and financial matters, policies, systems and procedures. Managers also need to communicate well and encourage a constructive working environment.

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### Quality area 4: **User-centred service**

Your organisation exists because of the benefit it can bring to its users. This quality area is about how you get to know who your users are and what they need, and how you inform and involve them in order to achieve better outcomes for them. You must have effective ways of collecting and reviewing user feedback.

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### Quality area 5: **Managing people**

Staff and volunteers are your organisation's most vital resource. This quality area is about how you recruit and manage them so that the organisation flourishes. It is also about how you value and support them so that they are motivated and effective.

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### Quality area 6: **Learning and development**

Learning opportunities are essential for the development of the organisation and its people. This quality area is about how people get the information and skills they need to work well. This includes having an organised approach to training and the other opportunities for learning.

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## Quality area 7: Managing money

For an organisation to survive, it must manage money competently. This quality area is about how you attract money to support your work, and then manage it effectively. This includes meeting your legal responsibilities and having a planned approach to getting the most out of your financial resources.

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## Quality area 8: Managing resources

This quality area is about how you manage non-financial resources – for example, equipment, premises and information – for the benefit of the organisation and its aims. This includes maintenance, health and safety, and environmental sustainability issues.

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## Quality area 9: Communications and promotion

Raising your profile and being clear about what you want people to know is essential if you want to promote your work and represent the needs of your users. This quality area is about how you raise awareness of your services and activities externally. It is also about how you communicate with external stakeholders and influence change.

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## Quality area 10: Working with others

Working with other organisations, in partnership or simply to gather information, can help your organisation to meet its aims. This quality area is about how you link with other organisations, how you give and get information, and how you systematically strengthen your work through partnership.

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## Quality area 11: Monitoring and evaluation

To ensure the best possible health and performance of your organisation, you need to systematically gather information and review it. This quality area is about the systems you use for monitoring and evaluation. It is about ensuring that people understand them and are using them effectively to learn from and improve what you do.

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## Quality area 12: Results

This quality area is about the results of your processes, activities and services, and the quality of information you have about them. It covers: **user results** – to what extent you achieve positive outcomes for your intended users; **people results** – the commitment and job satisfaction of your staff and volunteers; **organisational results** – whether you resource and deliver good quality services and activities as planned and within budget; and **community results** – how your organisation contributes to the wider community. Where possible, you demonstrate that your results are improving.

There is more about how to assess against the *Results* quality area on page 21.

## The three levels of achievement

PQASSO offers a staged approach to implementing quality through three levels of achievement.

All organisations should aim to achieve level 1 across all 12 quality areas as this level covers the minimum required to meet legal requirements and other obligations towards your users, employees and volunteers, and the wider community, which any responsible organisation would want to fulfil. Very small or newly formed organisations can use PQASSO as a guide to establishing a healthy organisation, and may initially decide to work towards achieving level 1 only.

Once they have achieved level 1, more established, larger or more complex organisations might decide to progress to level 2, and then possibly level 3. Decisions to progress to levels 2 or 3 will depend on your aspirations as an organisation and the resources you have available. It's important to read through the indicators carefully and decide if they describe the sort of organisation you aim to be. Level 3 in particular is challenging and is intended for organisations which have well established systems in place, which are well resourced, and which aspire to being leaders in their field.

## Working through the levels

### The differences between the three levels

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#### Level 1

- sets the minimum requirements that any organisation should meet
- helps organisations to identify and meet all their legal obligations as a service provider and as an employer
- lays the foundation for the effective planning and targeting of activities to help meet organisational objectives
- can be used to support the longer-term vision and development of the organisation.

#### Level 2

- builds on what has already been achieved in level 1
- assumes that organisations have a greater capacity to plan and monitor their work, and to develop their internal processes, than a level 1 organisation
- requires organisations to be more strategic in their approach to achieving their aims and objectives
- requires most organisational policies, procedures and practices to be documented
- requires a systematic approach to planning and to monitoring results, and a greater focus on outcomes.

### Level 3

- builds on the good work that has been achieved in levels 1 and 2
- requires the ability to act as a quality leader for other organisations in similar areas of work
- requires the organisation to compare itself to other organisations as a means of improving quality
- assumes an organisational capacity to develop alliances, share learning and influence wider change
- requires all aspects of organisational life to be systematically reviewed.

An organisation that considers itself ‘a level 2 (or level 3) organisation’ does still need to assess itself against level 1. If you ignore level 1 and assess your organisation only at a higher level, you run the risk of trying to achieve excellence without ensuring that the basic foundations are in place.

In order to achieve level 2, you should be able to show that you have already met all the criteria for level 1 consistently. In order to achieve level 3, you should be able to satisfy yourselves that you have already met all the criteria for levels 1 and 2 consistently for at least one year.

Each level offers guidance on what is required to run a healthy, efficient and effective organisation, and we recommend that you work across all the 12 quality areas before you move on to a new level. This ensures that your progress in one particular area is not held back by your lack of progress in another.

However, it may be that your organisation wishes to focus a lot of attention or resources on progressing in one particular quality area. In some instances this may be appropriate. Provided your achievements will not be hindered by the development needs in other areas, you may be able to progress without experiencing difficulties.

Organisations can apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark at level 1, level 2 or level 3. They must ensure they meet all the indicators in all the quality areas at their chosen level.

**The key message about the three levels of PQASSO is that you set your own pace, deciding which level or levels you want to achieve. This will depend on your organisation’s own priorities and the resources available to you.**

Where your organisation places itself initially, and how you progress across the levels, will rest on how you assess yourself and develop actions to improve. These are central processes in your management of quality and are described in Chapter 3.

## Chapter 3

# how PQASSO works

This chapter tells you how to use PQASSO to develop your organisation through self-assessment and action planning, and stresses the importance of evidence.

### What is self-assessment?

PQASSO has been designed to allow everyone involved in running an organisation and delivering activities and services to get involved in assessing how well their organisation is doing. When you carry out an internal review of your organisation – what it does and how it does it – using your own people, this is known as self-assessment. It is important that the self-assessment process reflects the views of the different stakeholders within the organisation: staff, volunteers, Board members and users. By involving people in this way, you are likely to get the benefits of better communication, a flow of ideas and fresh ways of thinking, as well as increased motivation.

The self-assessment process involves people in the organisation making judgements about the organisation's performance. You will do this by comparing how you are doing things against the defined PQASSO standards and the indicators that go with them. This is very challenging and powerful if done thoroughly and honestly. It is not about being defensive, or hiding bad practice and pretending it doesn't exist!

Self-assessment is not a 'one-off' process, but rather one you engage in on a regular basis as part of the management of the organisation. The process of self-assessment allows you to reflect on how you are doing at a given point in time and to assess where you would like to get to over the next year or so.

### Scoring

PQASSO helps you to decide how well your organisation is doing against its 12 standards and their indicators, by offering a method of assessment with four scoring options:

- **Not met**  
There is no evidence to show that the requirements of this indicator are in place.
- **Just started**  
We have plans for this and some improvement activities have already begun.
- **Progressing well**  
Some evidence is available, but we need to make further improvements.
- **Fully met**  
There is enough evidence to show that the requirements of this indicator are in place.

The example self-assessment page below shows how you would score against quality area 4, *User-centred service*, at level 1.

# 4

## user-centred service

**The standard:** The organisation recognises and values its users and builds good relationships with them. Users are central to the design, delivery and review of services and activities. The organisation is focused on achieving better outcomes for users and represents their interests.

### level 1

The organisation knows who its users are, avoids unfair discrimination, and makes its services accessible. Information about users is gathered and recorded, and the organisation responds appropriately to user feedback.

#### Indicators

	Not met	Just started	Progressing well	Fully met
1 User groups are clearly defined and targeted to prevent unfair discrimination or exclusion from services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Services and activities are based on the identified needs of the organisation’s users, including disadvantaged groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 The organisation plans, promotes and delivers its services so that it is fully accessible to its users.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Personal information about individual users is recorded and held confidentially, meeting data protection requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 The organisation works closely with individual users to monitor their needs, identify desired outcomes, and review progress.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Users are given detailed information about the organisation’s services and activities, and are encouraged to make appropriate choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 User feedback is encouraged and recorded, and complaints are dealt with openly and promptly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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When carrying out a self-assessment, discussions take place about how well your organisation is doing, and where its strengths and areas for improvement lie. You need evidence to help you to decide how well your organisation is meeting a particular indicator. This evidence will help you agree how you score each indicator. We recommend you don't spend too much time deciding which box to tick. The important thing is how you plan the way forward; this will be your main focus.

## Initial self-assessment

In order to kick-start the process, you may wish to carry out an initial self-assessment – a quick self-assessment against all 12 quality standards. This will give you a picture of how well you are doing overall and an idea of the improvements needed in each area. You need to think about when and how you will do this and who will be involved in it. This first scoring exercise will also help you to decide which quality standards to start with. However, we suggest that you don't start drawing up action plans until you have done a more detailed evidence-based self-assessment (see below). One reason why this stage serves as an initial self-assessment only, is that these first judgements are not based on a careful review of all the evidence.

## Evidence-based self-assessment

Once you have carried out the initial self-assessment and have decided which quality areas you want to start with, you then undertake a more detailed self-assessment against each standard. This will give you more information about what needs to be done.

You may find that you can't answer some of the questions which arise in your discussions. You might need more information before you can be really sure how to assess your organisation against the indicator in question. Once you have brought together the information you need, and have reviewed all the evidence you have, you will be able to identify things already in place which meet the requirements of the indicator, and all the areas for improvement, based on 'gaps' between your current practice and what the indicators require. This will enable you to score your organisation's performance against each indicator with greater certainty.

## Evidence

PQASSO is an evidence-based system. The term 'evidence', as used by PQASSO, means factual information which demonstrates that the organisation has met the requirements of a particular indicator. Evidence is key to PQASSO's implementation as it supports, confirms or tests your own view of your organisation's performance.

As PQASSO is a generic quality assurance system used by very different types and sizes of organisation, the sources of evidence listed in the PQASSO workpack are only suggestions. You may have other sources that provide equally valid evidence of how your organisation meets the requirements of the indicator. However, the sources of evidence suggested in PQASSO give you some ideas about the sort of documents which are common to many third sector organisations and where you might find evidence relevant to the indicator.

So, for example, in quality area 2, *Governance*, the first indicator at level 1 is:

- **Board members are appointed, resign or retire in line with legal requirements and the organisation’s governing document.**

... and PQASSO suggests the following sources of evidence:

- **The governing document (constitution, memorandum and articles of association or rules). List showing correct number of Board members. Eligibility checks for Board members. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks based on legal requirements and risk assessment. Records of appointments, elections, resignations, retirements or removals from office.**

Just having relevant documents is not enough. To find the evidence, you will need to compare what the governing document says about Board member appointment, resignation and retirement with what other documents tell you about what happens in practice in the organisation.

It’s also important to understand that finding evidence can include talking to relevant people, or thinking about how things are done, as well as looking at documents. It may not be appropriate or necessary, particularly in smaller organisations, for everything to be written down, unless an indicator specifically asks for something to be documented.

Sometimes documentary evidence may not be relevant. For example, the second indicator in quality area 2, *Governance*, is:

- **Board members receive an induction into the organisation, and are committed to its mission, values and aims.**

The suggested sources of evidence are:

- **Induction information for new Board members. Records of introductory meetings.**

Some organisations may not keep records of induction meetings but may still be carrying out inductions for Board members and so meet the requirements of this part of the indicator. Documents alone are unlikely to provide evidence that Board members are committed to the organisation’s mission, values and aims. You will probably need to talk to Board members and consider how their commitment is demonstrated in their overall contribution to the organisation.

Generally, you need to decide what counts as evidence according to the particular nature of your organisation, and supplement or change PQASSO’s suggested lists of sources of evidence with additional or alternative sources of evidence that are appropriate. Note that you can also use one piece of evidence for more than one indicator, or for more than one quality area.

## Demonstrating results

Quality areas 1 to 11 focus on how you govern and manage your organisation, your work practices, and how you relate to your users and other stakeholders. For these quality areas, you will need to provide evidence of how you do things.

However, for quality area 12, *Results*, you will need to find evidence of what you have achieved. These results will strongly depend on the quality of all the management processes, activities and relationships you have put in place, and which are assessed in quality areas 1 to 11. For example, you will be best placed to achieve the results in quality area 12 at level 2 if you have already put in place the requirements of the other quality areas at that level.

PQASSO presents these results under the following four headings:

- **user results**
- **people results**
- **organisational results**
- **community results.**

The results you achieve for your users are the main reason that you put effort into meeting the standards in all the other quality areas. In demonstrating these results, PQASSO expects you to have good evidence about the value of your work and the benefits it provides – your organisation’s outcomes. This evidence also allows you to be accountable to your funders and other stakeholders, and will give you valuable learning.

However, you are less likely to achieve excellent results for your users if you do not achieve good results for the people in your organisation and for your organisation itself. For example, quality area 6, *Learning and development*, deals with how people in the organisation develop their skills and knowledge. So, in quality area 12, *Results*, PQASSO looks for evidence of staff and volunteer competence. In quality area 7 you will be concerned with how you manage your money. And, in quality area 12, you will look for evidence that your finances are in good order and sufficient to carry out your plans.

There is a particular relationship linking quality area 1, *Planning*, quality area 11, *Monitoring and evaluation*, and quality area 12, *Results*:

- In quality area 1, *Planning*, you set clear aims and objectives, clarify the expected benefits, or results, for users, and plan your income generation and human resources. You may be setting targets for these different results.
- Quality area 11, *Monitoring and evaluation*, takes you through the different processes you will need to follow, and the systems you will need to have in place, to produce the evidence to assess whether you have achieved your planned results, and whether you meet your chosen level in quality area 12, *Results*.
- You will need to identify, from the indicators in quality area 12, what results information you need, and make sure that you are monitoring and providing information against each indicator. Your information will come from a number of different sources, such as user feedback, staff surveys, discussions with stakeholders, or your management accounts. You will have some of this information in evaluation reports.

Your user outcomes information will need particular attention. When you are planning, and before you can gather any information, you will first need to agree within the organisation what your expected outcomes will be. You will then be able to

identify relevant indicators against which you can assess whether you have achieved these outcomes.

You can find more information on assessing outcomes in the CES publication, *Your Project and its Outcomes*, and more about monitoring and evaluation more generally in CES' *Practical Monitoring and Evaluation*. (See page 50)

## Recording and reviewing evidence

It is up to you as an organisation how you record details of your evidence. You may create your own way of doing this, or you can use the *Evidence record* template at the back of the PQASSO workpack or the PQASSO CD-ROM. Although the self-assessment process involves identifying and recording all the evidence, we would discourage you from storing the evidence together in a special 'PQASSO file'. It's best to locate your evidence in places where it will be most useful on a day-to-day basis and simply record on your self-assessment record where the evidence can be found.

When doing a self-assessment, make sure you are basing this on the indicators rather than the suggested sources of evidence. Think creatively and don't create pieces of paper as evidence without thinking about what you already have in place to demonstrate that you meet the standard. Documents which have been created solely to demonstrate that you meet an indicator but which are not used in practice are not valid evidence.

Reviewing the sources of evidence will involve asking a number of questions about the quality of the evidence itself. For example, for evidence that is written down in a document, you might check whether the evidence is '**CARD**':

### **C** Consistent

Is practice consistent with policy and procedures? When evidence is collated, do documents complement and not contradict other documents?

### **A** Accessible

Are all relevant staff, Board members, volunteers and users aware of the existence of the evidence and where they can find it?

### **R** Recent

Is the evidence up to date? Has it been recently developed or reviewed?

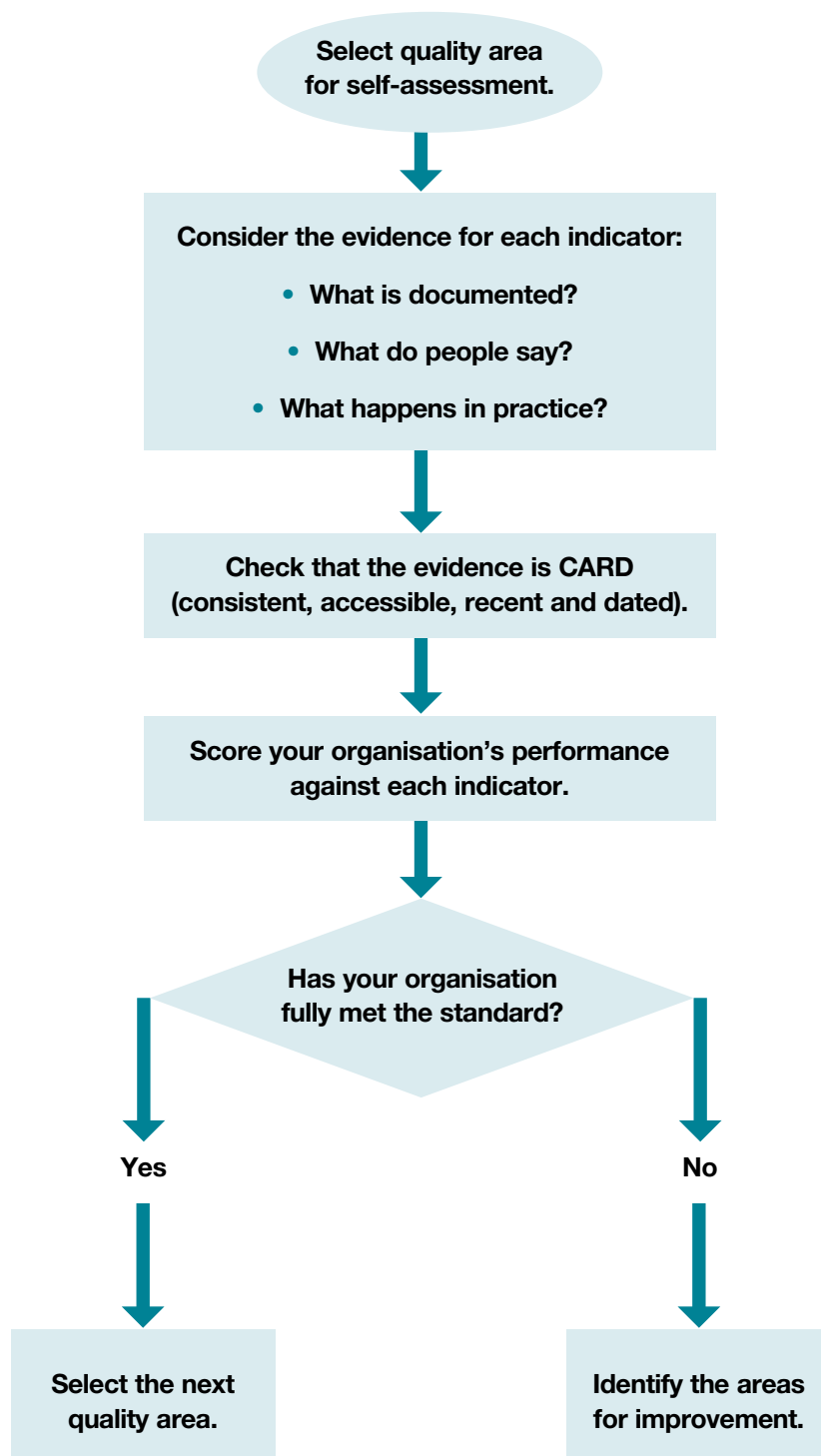
### **D** Dated

Do you know when the evidence dates from? Is there a date on it?

So, you need to be confident you have good evidence in place before you decide your organisation has fully met an indicator. If you cannot provide good evidence, you will need relevant action in your action plan.

The PQASSO CD-ROM includes a feature to print your evidence in the format required for a PQASSO Quality Mark peer review. There is more about the PQASSO CD-ROM on page 45.

## The self-assessment process



## Developing detailed action plans

If, having considered the evidence, you consider that your organisation has not fully met the standard, you will now need to draw up an action plan to address the areas for improvement you have identified. Action plans should show the agreed improvements for the specific quality area, the people responsible for making those improvements, and the dates by which you want the improvements completed. There is an *Action plan* template in the back of the PQASSO workpack and on the PQASSO CD-ROM. You may find it helpful to use these or you may want to develop your own.

Your self-assessment is likely to generate a long list of areas for improvement, so before drawing up your plans, the first stage is to prioritise these, taking into consideration different criteria. These will include, above all:

- What is most important to the survival of the organisation?

You may also want to think about the following questions:

- Will it improve things for our users?
- Does it need to be done now or can it wait?
- Have we got the resources to do it?
- Would it be easy to do?
- Would it be risky not to do it?

All tasks in the action plan should be delegated to individuals, or a group of individuals, who have responsibility for completing them by an agreed date. Action points should, wherever possible, be **SMART**, that is:

- S**    **specific**
- M**    **measurable**
- A**    **achievable**
- R**    **resourced**
- T**    **time-bound.**

For example:

### Action point **Quality area 2: Governance**

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The coordinator, with the support of the Governance sub-committee, will recruit two additional Board members with identified professional skills by the end of August this year, in time for the annual general meeting.

## Action point **Quality area 6: Learning and development**

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Senior management will review and update the training and development policy by the end of the year, to include information about how the training budget may be used by staff, volunteers and Board members.

When developing action plans, remember the following:

- Be specific about the tasks to be completed.
- Delegate responsibility for completing the tasks to a named person or named people.
- Always keep a written record of action to be taken and who will do it.
- Agree the stages needed to complete a task.
- Determine what the procedure should be, if unplanned events affect deadlines.
- Above all, be realistic about the time and resources available.

It is helpful to think about how these individual action plans can be integrated into the organisation's overall plan for PQASSO (see page 30) as well as your annual operational or business plans.

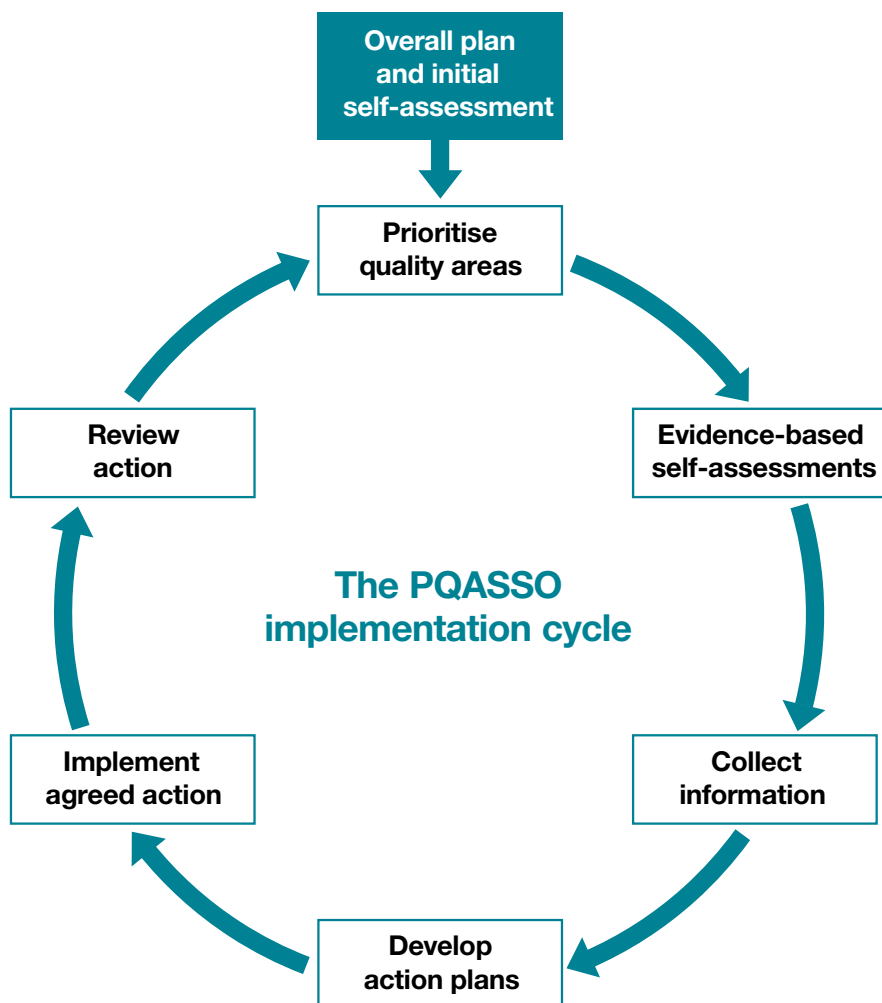
## **Having confidence in your self-assessment**

You will have more confidence in your self-assessment if you bear in mind the following:

- To demonstrate the level at which your organisation is operating, you need evidence. Make sure that you check the evidence (that it is CARD – consistent, accessible, recent and dated), so that your scoring can be justified. It's especially important to make sure that evidence which isn't documented is accurate and not based on just one person's opinion.
- Self-assessment takes time and effort. Organisations committed to the process are more likely to carry it through successfully and to reflect their organisation's performance most accurately in their self-assessment.
- Training may help people to carry out self-assessment activities effectively.
- Self-assessment should be carried out with a cross-section of people from within the organisation.
- Your self-assessments will improve. View your first self-assessment as a learning process.

## The implementation cycle

Self-assessment and action planning are at the heart of the process of implementing PQASSO. However, the real value of PQASSO is in implementing the actions outlined in your action plans, in order to improve the organisation. This is the key to using PQASSO successfully. It's therefore important to review progress against your action plans to make sure the planned improvements have been implemented.



This cycle of assessment, action planning and review will result in real learning and improvement for your organisation. In Chapters 4 and 5 we look more closely at overall planning for PQASSO at the beginning of the process, and at how to keep work on PQASSO going by repeating the cycle, and moving up through the PQASSO levels as appropriate for your organisation.

## Chapter 4

# getting started on PQASSO

This chapter looks at what you can do to help introduce PQASSO successfully, stressing the importance of involving people, getting the process strongly led, and planning.

You may feel that getting started on PQASSO is the most difficult part of the whole process. It may be the first time your organisation has introduced a quality management system. Even if implementing quality improvements isn't new to your organisation, being systematic about it may be. In either case, there are some pointers that can help you find the best way of taking PQASSO forward.

### Getting people involved

Everyone in an organisation has a role in implementing quality. The number of people involved in implementing PQASSO and the degree of their involvement will depend on the size and culture of your organisation.

It can be helpful to set up a small quality team or working group and give it a coordinating role. A working group including staff, Board members, managers, volunteers, and users if appropriate and willing, will ensure a full range of perspectives.

It is important to bring in staff at different levels of the organisation, working in different functions, to generate a flow of ideas and enable a good blend of contributions. Senior managers have a good strategic overview of the organisation, while frontline workers have an appreciation of what is happening on the ground. Getting a good cross-section of people together gives the group an invaluable view of the organisation's performance and future potential. An external person could join the group too, as a 'critical friend'. He or she may have expertise in a certain topic or in quality management. One of your funders, a local council for voluntary service officer, or someone from an umbrella body to which you belong may be able to perform this role.

Different people will need to be involved according to the topic or quality area you are working on. You may wish to consider having a core group which additional members join, as appropriate. For example, you may want the Treasurer or Finance Director to join the quality working group when it is doing its self-assessment of quality area 7, *Managing money*. Or in larger organisations you may want different departments to focus on particular quality areas. Beware of creating 'closed groups' – for example, having only managers present to consider quality area 3, *Leadership and management*. On the other hand, avoid involving people in specific areas about which they have little or no knowledge.

At the action planning stage, it is important to include senior managers who have control over operational planning and budget setting. There is little point formulating long lists of action points if the organisation does not have the staff time or financial resources to implement them.

So, there are a number of considerations to be taken into account when thinking about who should join the quality working group. In order to be successful, the working group will need:

- authority and recognition – so that different people in the organisation will participate in self-assessment and take forward action plans as required
- time for meetings, and for action to be carried out between meetings
- resources – for example, expenses and meeting space
- access to people, information and evidence
- methods for communication with and support from colleagues.

**‘PQASSO enabled us to look frankly at what we do and measure against a standard: much better than working on the basis of an assumption that you’re “doing the right thing”.’**  
Theatre Resource

## Leading the process

There is value in identifying a senior manager, or someone else within the organisation, who can take lead responsibility for PQASSO, lead the working group and keep the quality process on track. This is the role of the ‘PQASSO champion’ who will:

- ensure that quality working group meetings take place
- chair the working group meetings
- manage the implementation of the overall plan
- ensure that the working group’s progress is communicated to the rest of the organisation
- act as a ‘progress chaser’, ensuring that action points are taken forward.

It is important that the PQASSO champion has a good understanding of how PQASSO works. He or she may want to attend PQASSO training or get the support of a PQASSO mentor. (See page 45 for information on resources to support your work with PQASSO.)

The PQASSO champion needs enough time and the authority within the organisation to carry out his or her role. He or she will need the active support of the Board, the chief executive and other senior colleagues to keep PQASSO on the agenda and ensure the work goes forward. Necessary resources also need to be in place. The PQASSO champion’s role is to facilitate the process of implementing PQASSO. They should not be seen as the sole person responsible for all work relating to PQASSO that is carried out within the organisation, as this would become burdensome and ineffective; the implementation of PQASSO cannot be one person’s responsibility.

**‘Commitment and leadership from the top of the organisation are essential.’**  
Plymouth Guild

## Planning the implementation of PQASSO

### Overall plan

PQASSO is designed to be worked through over a period of time, so planning how and when this is going to be done is very important.

An overall plan includes your overall purpose and strategy for implementing PQASSO, and puts into a realistic timeframe all the steps involved in introducing and implementing PQASSO within your organisation.

In terms of overall strategy, you will want to consider which level of PQASSO you want to aim for in the longer term (see Chapter 2 for more about the levels) and over what timescale you will aim to achieve it. You may also want to plan for when you're aiming to achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark.

If you are in a larger organisation, you will need to think about whether PQASSO will be implemented by the whole organisation or whether you will start with particular parts of the organisation. Over time, larger organisations may plan to use PQASSO to ensure consistency across different departments, local branches, or among members of a federated organisation.

The overall plan should also include details of what needs to be done, who will get things done, and when. It could also include information about when and possibly how PQASSO will be introduced to the Board, the staff team and other stakeholders. The plan could contain dates for each of the self-assessments against the quality standards. As work progresses, all your plans relating to specific standards (see *Developing detailed action plans* on page 25) will be added to your overall plan so that you have an idea of what needs to happen and when. You may also want to consider bringing in external help, support or training, and this will need to be thought through and detailed in your overall plan.

In your overall plan, you can usefully consider the following.

- Agreeing the number of quality areas you would like to achieve over a given period
- Setting realistic and achievable deadlines, taking into account major events already planned for your organisation
- Ensuring that your overall plan for PQASSO dovetails with other organisational plans and their cycles – for example, annual operational or work planning.
- Taking into account other planned events that you may need to consider, so that timetables and workloads are realistic. For example, if you are about to move office, a significant amount of time will be taken up by the move and this may result in your having to put off major quality improvements for a while.
- Building in a regular review to meet any changed circumstances.

You may not choose to plan in as much detail as this, but time spent at this stage is likely to be well worth it. Even a broad outline plan indicating how you will move forward with PQASSO will be helpful.

## Working with the quality areas

Deciding where to start and the order in which to approach the 12 quality areas is an important part of the self-assessment process.

Organisations may decide to start with an area they feel familiar with, or they may want to start with quality area 1 and work their way towards quality area 12. Carrying out an initial self-assessment (see page 20) will help you to decide where to start and to put your quality areas in order of priority.

It will be useful to establish criteria to help you to decide where to start. You could go for a ‘quick win’, starting with a quality area representing your agreed strengths. It can be useful to start with an area that is less challenging so that people have a chance to ‘get on board’ and get to grips with the PQASSO process at the same time.

Alternatively, you could begin with a quality area that needs to be addressed urgently. Or you may have other considerations, such as needing to link with internal strategic objectives, or using information from funders or service users to identify the first quality areas you work on.

Some of the quality areas make logical groupings and could be looked at together – for example, quality area 5, *Managing people*, and quality area 6, *Learning and development*.

Your initial self-assessment against quality area 12 may be particularly powerful in helping you to prioritise. For example, if your initial scoring against financial results is low, you may want to prioritise work on quality area 7, *Managing money*. However, most organisations work their way through the first 11 quality areas before carrying out the more detailed, evidence-based assessment against quality area 12, *Results*, on the basis that improvements to the way you do things are likely to produce better results.

It is worth taking time to think through all the considerations that might be important for your organisation in deciding on the order and pace at which you will work on the quality areas.

If you’re planning to apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark, you will need to self-assess and complete any action plans required to meet the standards at your chosen level in all 12 quality areas before you start the PQASSO Quality Mark process.

There is more about how you can apply for and achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark in Chapter 6. Before that, Chapter 5 provides some helpful tips about how to manage and maintain your commitment to quality.

## Chapter 5

# keeping it going

This chapter considers what you need to do to keep your quality initiatives alive, and how to maintain what you have achieved through working with PQASSO. It also includes some ‘top tips’ for implementing PQASSO gained from the experience of other PQASSO users.

As part of a dynamic third sector, your organisation is likely to be constantly changing. Your users’ needs and expectations are also likely to change and it is important to improve and develop your services and activities to address this. Developing quality improvements is a continuous process. It is not something you do and then stop. Improving the quality of an organisation should eventually become an ongoing part of an organisational culture in which everybody is involved and should lead to measurable results over time.

### Factors for success

The most comprehensive research into quality management in the third sector was undertaken by Aston University’s Centre for Voluntary Action Research in 2004. Its research report, *The Adoption and Use of Quality Systems in the Voluntary Sector*, identified five key elements that remain relevant to the successful use of a quality system:

- an implementation plan and structure
- stakeholder involvement
- leadership and a ‘quality champion’
- integration with other processes
- resources.

Centre for Voluntary  
Action Research  
(2004) *The Adoption  
and Use of Quality  
Systems in the  
Voluntary Sector:  
Research Report*,  
National Council  
for Voluntary  
Organisations and  
Charities Evaluation  
Services, London.

Below we explain how these five elements work with PQASSO.

### **Implementation plan and structure**

First, everyone needs to understand why the organisation is embarking on a process that will require significant resources and may involve substantial change. Once an organisation has a clear vision of what it wants to achieve, it needs a plan for putting it all into practice. (See *Overall plan* on page 30) As with any other plans, your overall plan for PQASSO will need to be periodically reviewed and updated to take account of progress made and changing priorities.

### **Stakeholder involvement**

You need to spend some time thinking about who should be involved. The whole organisation (not just paid staff) should attach importance to quality improvement, so include Board members in your thinking and consider how you will get people interested and involved. Think about what people's motivation might be and their areas of skill, knowledge and interest. It is at this stage that you will think about how a working group might be useful, and who should be involved in the group. One tip is to 'refresh' the quality team by bringing in new members, possibly when moving to a new level. This will bring in new viewpoints and help to spread the workload.

### **Leadership and a quality champion**

For PQASSO to be a success, you need top-level commitment to the quality improvement process. A PQASSO champion can play a vital role in moving the process forward and engaging people's enthusiasm, provided he or she has the right skills, knowledge and authority within the organisation. If necessary, you can look for support and direction externally to support the PQASSO champion. The ongoing support of the Board, the chief executive and other senior staff will also be essential to keep the process going and to make a real difference over time to the way the organisation does things and the results it achieves.

### **Integration with other processes**

Elements of PQASSO should be included in everyday activities and become an integral part of your planning, your management, the way you do things and the services you provide for your users. PQASSO should not be seen as separate to, or added to, your routine work. If work on quality is viewed as an 'extra', to be fitted in as and when staff have enough time, it may be hard to make progress. There are some suggestions for how to build PQASSO into your everyday working life in the box on the next page.

## Keeping PQASSO at the centre of what you do

Make sure that there is a shared understanding of why you are investing time and resources in implementing PQASSO and a shared commitment to it. Here are some ideas for maintaining that commitment.

- Integrate your overall plan for PQASSO and detailed PQASSO action plans into your annual operational plan for the organisation and into more detailed workplans for teams and individuals.
- Add PQASSO to the agenda of all internal meetings, including Board meetings, to help you to keep track of how you are doing. You could also undertake self-assessment exercises during these meetings.
- Make sure you describe your use of PQASSO in all grant applications, contract bids and project proposals.
- Make sure job descriptions are clear about responsibility for quality and that quality is discussed during induction of Board members, staff and volunteers.
- Discuss PQASSO self-assessment findings and action plans in team meetings, staff supervisions and appraisals, and in review meetings with volunteers.
- Write about progress on PQASSO in the annual report and put it on the annual general meeting agenda.

As your organisation integrates PQASSO into its everyday working practices, you may find yourself using PQASSO in more and more ways, sometimes in ways that are less immediately 'visible'. For example, the PQASSO quality areas can provide a useful framework or checklist for thinking about project plans, new service developments or even the way that information is organised in internal filing systems or intranets. Or, indicators in quality area 12, *Results*, can be used as a starting point for developing key performance indicators for the organisation.

**'In terms of difficulties the main one was carving out the time to carry out the assessments and action plans.**

**However, once you begin to see the benefits of these, this helps to build the momentum behind the process.'**

VOCAL (Voice of Carers Across Lothian)

### Resources

It is very important to consider the resources you will need for implementing PQASSO and making improvements, and this needs to be done before you start using PQASSO. The most precious of these resources is likely to be time. Adequate time will be needed to plan, self-assess and, crucially, to carry out the action plans. Other resources might include staff cover, training fees, external advice and support, administrative support and meeting expenses.

Remember to balance this resource investment against any possible inefficient or ineffective practice and lost opportunities if you don't do it. Investing in some improvements is better than investing in none so, if your resources are limited, be realistic about what is achievable for your organisation.

Looking at the bigger or longer-term picture, work on PQASSO should help you to maximise the resources available to you, and to prioritise and achieve balance in the way you allocate those resources between different aspects of running the organisation, making the best use of what you have.

Above all, remember that the overall purpose of PQASSO is to help you to sustain and improve your organisation for the benefit of your staff and volunteers, your funders and, most importantly, your users. The key message is that you're not there to work for PQASSO – PQASSO is there to work for you.

### People and Places in Gloucestershire: laying a good foundation

People and Places in Gloucestershire is a small social enterprise giving people with severe mental health problems, and those who have been on long-term incapacity benefit, the opportunity to gain work experience within a safe, supportive and relaxed environment.

The organisation decided to use PQASSO on the basis of its appropriateness to the sector, its low cost and the availability of implementation support locally. They also liked the fact that it had three levels and that they could progress and develop their organisation step by step. PQASSO would enable them to lay the foundations for what they were trying to achieve.

*'PQASSO gave us a clear structure to constantly evaluate the quality of the services we are providing.'*

Implementing PQASSO has led to the following improvements at People and Places:

- better ways of assessing and managing risk
- better channels for gathering feedback from service users about their experience of the services and the difference they made
- more systematic use of feedback to plan services
- better human resource management, with support from an external consultant
- an ability to plan more proactively for the future.

*'We now know how we want to develop in each area.'*

#### Tips from People and Places for potential users of PQASSO

- Take your time. Absorb what is contained within the 12 quality areas, rather than 'jumping straight in'.
- Access support if it's available.
- Don't worry about it. It's not difficult!

## Maintaining your achievement

Having met all the requirements of PQASSO at a particular level, you will need to think about how to maintain the standards at the level you have achieved, and decide whether to go on to the next level. (See Chapter 2 for information about the different levels and which might be appropriate for your organisation.) Things change over time in all organisations so, even if you decide not to move up to the next level of PQASSO, you should review your self-assessment against each of the standards on a regular cycle. Think about a review cycle that is right for your organisation. Don't review too often or nothing much may have changed and it will feel too repetitive. But don't leave it too long so that things start to slip. Be guided by what you know about your organisation, where things may have changed, and where your priorities now lie.

You may decide to apply to be externally assessed, in order to achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark. The PQASSO Quality Mark lasts for three years, at the end of which time you will need to be reassessed. In preparation for this reassessment you will need to review and update your previous self-assessment. If you are applying for the PQASSO Quality Mark at a higher level than before, you will also need to have self-assessed and completed any action plans required to meet the requirements of the new level.

## Top tips

### Get top level commitment.

Getting real and active commitment from the Board, the chief executive and senior managers is crucial. They need to champion the system and to act as role models for the rest of the organisation, including being willing to work with others to carry out a self-assessment against the quality areas which relate most closely to their roles – quality area 2, *Governance*, and quality area 3, *Leadership and management*. They will also be key to allocating resources for your work on PQASSO and integrating it into the organisation's overall plans.

### Manage the implementation of PQASSO over time.

Once your overall plan is in place, a key responsibility for managers is to see it through and not get pulled off course. It will take time to develop a quality initiative, so be realistic about how long it will take to implement PQASSO, and don't rush it. When you first get started, there may be times when there is little to show for your efforts. Sticking to your plan, keeping up the momentum and providing continual guidance are important tasks.

### Don't take on too much at once.

Be careful about taking on too much and feeling swamped. Don't be too ambitious. Think about some criteria that you can use to prioritise the 12 quality areas and how you tackle your action points – for example, the degree of urgency or the level of resources required. People will feel encouraged if you approach PQASSO one step at a time and reward yourselves for small-scale achievements and positive steps along the way.

### Build on what you are doing well.

Effective quality programmes develop what works now, making good practice consistent across the organisation and introducing improvements where necessary. Working with PQASSO should be seen as a developmental process, building on existing good practice rather than starting from scratch. Some small-scale improvements can sometimes be as important as larger ones.

**Communicate well.**

Good communication with people inside the organisation and with key people outside the organisation is crucial. Consider how key stakeholders can feed in their own thoughts, and when and how quality plans and progress are reported back to the wider organisation. This will need careful planning in large organisations where people across different departments or branches may need to be involved.

**Keep people motivated.**

Prioritise the areas you work on and report back on these so that staff see some real benefits as early as possible. Consider the benefits for staff and funders of getting external recognition for your achievements through the PQASSO Quality Mark.

**See PQASSO as a continual learning process.**

Managers can help by encouraging people to share ideas and practices and by showing their personal commitment to gradual but continuous improvement. As well as learning about the process of developing quality, people in different parts of the organisation need to be encouraged to learn from each other and from those in other similar organisations about what works. Most importantly, the organisation needs to involve and learn from users about their experience of services, the difference the services have made to them, and their aspirations for the future.

**‘Getting the PQASSO Quality Mark was a real boast internally for trustees, staff and volunteers, who are very proud of what they have achieved.’**  
Plymouth Guild

**Taking PQASSO forward**

How far and how successfully your organisation embraces the PQASSO approach is likely to depend very largely on whether people regard it as an opportunity or a threat. Starting work on PQASSO can be both an exciting and daunting time for your organisation. Here are some positive messages to help you along your way.

- PQASSO is about assessing your performance now and planning for the future. Be constructive and think about moving forwards, instead of going over past mistakes.
- Don’t undervalue yourself or be over-critical. Use your self-assessments as an opportunity to celebrate your achievements before you move on to the work that needs to be done.
- Some of the work that PQASSO generates needs to be done to meet legal requirements and fulfil your obligations towards your staff, volunteers and users. So take this opportunity to do this in a planned and thorough way.
- Self-assessment is a process of learning. Seize this opportunity to bring different people in the organisation together to share views and information about what you are trying to achieve, how well you are doing and how you can do things better.

Using PQASSO enables you to see the progress of your organisation over time. Maintaining achievement of the standards, moving up the levels and achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark demonstrate clearly to staff and volunteers, users and funders that you are a quality organisation committed to continuous improvement. The seven steps to achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark are explained in the next chapter.

## Chapter 6

# the PQASSO Quality Mark

This chapter explains how to apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark and how the assessment process works, and describes what is required for an organisation to be awarded the PQASSO Quality Mark.

### When should we apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark?

Once you've self-assessed against all 12 quality areas and implemented all the action points needed to fully meet the indicators at a particular level, you are ready to apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark – the external assessment and 'kitemark' for PQASSO. You can apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark at level 1, 2 or 3.

Achieving the Quality Mark has benefited a wide range of organisations, from very small organisations with few paid staff to large organisations with hundreds of staff and operating over multiple sites.

However, the decision to apply for the PQASSO Quality Mark will depend on a number of factors:

- Would you find it helpful to be reviewed against the PQASSO standards by someone from outside your organisation but who is a PQASSO expert and understands the third sector?
- Is the achievement of a recognised award important to motivate and encourage your staff and volunteers?
- Is an externally-assessed quality assurance system required by any of your current or potential funders or partners?
- Will the award help you access new sources of funding or become part of a new network or membership?

And, if you do decide that you want to aim for the PQASSO Quality Mark, you also need to think carefully about when is the right time:

- Are you confident that you have fully met all the requirements of PQASSO at your chosen level?
- Do you have the necessary financial resources?

Applying for the PQASSO Quality Mark is an important decision. The decision should be discussed with and approved by your Board and not made by an individual staff member or by an external consultant or CES licensed PQASSO mentor. The process of assessment will mean an investment of time and money, so it's important to take the time to consider whether achieving the Quality Mark is right for your organisation, and not to rush the decision.

**'There are lots of benefits to achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark: knowing that all aspects of your organisation are fit for purpose – staff, volunteers, Board, financial systems – and having a recognised and respected quality mark to evidence your commitment to quality to users, partners and funders.'**  
VOCAL (Voice of Carers Across Lothian)

## What does achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark involve?

To achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark, your organisation will undergo an external assessment. This involves external assessors gathering and reviewing evidence that your organisation has met the PQASSO standards at a chosen level. As with self-assessment, assessment for the PQASSO Quality Mark is based on the PQASSO indicators. The PQASSO Quality Mark is awarded to organisations who can demonstrate that they meet all the indicators at the chosen level of PQASSO. Unlike self-assessment, in external assessment there are only two scores that can be given against each indicator: 'met' or 'not met'. 'Met' is the equivalent of 'fully met' in self-assessment.

The external assessment will be carried out by PQASSO Quality Mark peer reviewers – people who work in the third sector and who are specially trained and supported by CES to carry out reviews of organisations against the PQASSO standards. The number of peer reviewers appointed by CES to review your organisation will depend on the size of the organisation and the level of PQASSO at which you apply. There are normally one, two or three reviewers, one of whom is appointed to be the lead reviewer. The lead reviewer is responsible for liaising with you to make all the arrangements for the review and for ensuring that the review is carried out properly, and within agreed timeframes. The assessment process is known as the peer review process.

There are two main elements to the peer review process – the desktop review and the site visit.

### The desktop review

At the desktop review you will be asked to send to the peer reviewers a range of documents which give important information about your organisation and include key sources of evidence for many PQASSO indicators. Examples of documents required for the desktop review include your annual report and accounts, minutes of your Board meetings, and information about your services or activities. You are also required to send a completed *Peer Review Workbook* in which you will have recorded your organisation's documentary evidence for each indicator at the chosen level of PQASSO. If you have used the PQASSO CD-ROM (see Chapter 7, *Resources*) to record your evidence during the self-assessment process, it will automatically generate a *Peer Review Workbook* for you. A full list of all the documents required for the desktop review at each level of PQASSO is available on the CES website.

The desktop review helps the peer reviewers to determine whether your organisation is ready for the site visit and also helps them to prepare for the visit. All information provided to the peer reviewers will remain secure and confidential.

### The site visit

The next stage of the peer review process is the site visit. The purpose of the site visit is for the peer reviewers to gather evidence to assess whether your organisation meets the requirements of PQASSO at your chosen level. This involves the peer reviewers visiting your organisation to gather further evidence by looking at more documents and interviewing sample staff, Board members and volunteers. If your organisation operates over a number of sites, the reviewers will normally arrange to visit a sample of sites where different activities take place. Similarly, reviewers will want to interview a range of people at different levels and undertaking different activities in the organisation.

## Evidence required for the PQASSO Quality Mark

The peer reviewers will look for evidence from a range of different sources. Evidence may be found in documents, or from interviews with people working in the organisation, or from observation of working practices. The *Peer Review Workbook* completed by the organisation and supplied for the desktop review will list all the evidence identified by the organisation against each of the PQASSO indicators. Reviewers will therefore spend time during the site visit checking for evidence that has been listed in the *Peer Review Workbook*. However, a peer review is a sampling exercise. Although the peer reviewers will need to see some evidence against each of the PQASSO indicators at the chosen level, they will not be able to see every document or interview every member of staff.

Peer reviewers do not expect organisations applying for the PQASSO Quality Mark to have all the documents listed under *Sources of evidence* in the PQASSO workpack. However, CES publishes guidance for organisations and reviewers on the key evidence – written and oral – which reviewers will normally look for when carrying out a peer review against each of the levels of PQASSO. This is called *Guidance on PQASSO Indicators* and is available on our website [www.pqassoqualitymark.org.uk](http://www.pqassoqualitymark.org.uk)

For example, below is an indicator from quality area 5, *Managing people*:

- All staff have documented roles, responsibilities and accountabilities, and understand what they have to do. Volunteers understand what is expected of them.

The *Guidance on PQASSO Indicators* for level 1 says that peer reviewers will be looking for the following evidence:

- There are written job descriptions for all staff.
- People can describe their roles and responsibilities in line with their role description.
- People know who they report to and, if applicable, who reports to them.

Notice the mix of written and oral evidence listed in the guidance. It is also worth noting the difference between the evidence listed in the guidance and the list of sources of evidence suggested in the PQASSO workpack against this indicator. The PQASSO workpack includes staff job descriptions and volunteer role descriptions. The indicator refers to staff roles being documented, but does not require this for volunteers – so peer reviewers cannot require this. On the other hand, if your organisation happens to have documented role descriptions for volunteers, peer reviewers will be happy to use these as additional valid evidence that you have met the requirements of this indicator.

It is important to note that, if you are applying for the PQASSO Quality Mark at level 2 or level 3, you will be expected to have evidence not only against the level at which you're applying, but also against the lower level (or levels) of PQASSO. This is because the award of the PQASSO Quality Mark at, say, level 2 implies that your organisation has achieved the PQASSO standards at both level 1 and level 2.

**‘The process was very comprehensive and made us feel that we had not got there by ticking boxes but were able to demonstrate to the assessors the high-quality organisation that we have become. There were not many stones left unturned. The reviewers were professional and knowledgeable. We were very impressed.’**  
Plymouth Guild

Just as with self-assessment, peer reviewers will want to check that evidence is ‘CARD’ – consistent, accessible, recent and dated. To check consistency, reviewers will check evidence from one source against another. For example, they may compare written policies, procedures or minutes of meetings with the descriptions given by interviewees of what happens in practice, or they may ask a number of interviewees about the same topic. This helps to make sure that the evidence is based on fact and not on one person’s opinion or hearsay. To check accessibility, reviewers will ask relevant interviewees if they know about, and know where to find, particular documents.

## Reporting

At the end of the site visit, the peer reviewers will meet with representatives of the organisation to present you with a summary report of their review findings. The report will inform you of the peer reviewers’ recommendation to CES as to whether your organisation meets the PQASSO requirements and can be awarded the PQASSO Quality Mark, or whether you will be required to carry out some improvement actions before the PQASSO Quality Mark can be awarded.

## Developing improvement action plans

If your organisation does not yet meet the PQASSO standards at the time of the site visit, you will be asked to draw up an improvement action plan to address the areas for improvement or ‘gaps’ between your organisation’s current practice and the requirements of PQASSO. A simple template for the improvement action plan is available on the CES website.

It is up to your organisation to decide how you want to address the areas for improvement identified in the review. Peer reviewers are trained to assess the evidence in order to make a judgement about whether indicators are met or not met, but their role does not include advising organisations on how to meet the requirements of PQASSO. It is important to be aware that the peer reviewers are not there to act as consultants. Organisations who need advice and help to work on areas of PQASSO are advised to contact a CES licensed PQASSO mentor.

See Chapter 7 on resources available to support your work on PQASSO.

## Implementing agreed improvements

Organisations are given a grace period to carry out improvements and provide evidence to the peer reviewers that they have done so. If the lead reviewer is satisfied with the evidence supplied, he or she will then recommend to CES that the organisation is awarded the PQASSO Quality Mark.

## After the review

If your organisation has met the PQASSO standards and CES accepts the findings of the review, your organisation will be awarded the PQASSO Quality Mark certificate and logo, showing the level at which the Quality Mark has been awarded.

Organisations which have achieved the PQASSO Quality Mark at level 2 or level 3 of PQASSO 3rd edition are also entitled to use an additional logo showing endorsement by the Charity Commission (see below).



The PQASSO Quality Mark is valid for three years.

## The seven steps to the PQASSO Quality Mark

The flowchart below summarises the steps to achieve the PQASSO Quality Mark.

### Step 1 Implement PQASSO

You need to purchase the PQASSO workpack, complete the self-assessment and be confident that you have the evidence in place to demonstrate that you have met the PQASSO standards at your chosen level.

### Step 2 Application

You should complete and submit the PQASSO Quality Mark Application Form.

### Step 3 Planning the review

An assessor, known as a peer reviewer will be selected and will contact you to agree dates for the desktop review and the site visit.

### Step 4 Desktop review

You will submit specific organisational documents to the peer reviewer(s) to assess in preparation for the site visit.

### Step 5 Site visit

The peer reviewer(s) will visit your organisation to conduct interviews and gather evidence and determine whether you fully meet the PQASSO standards.

### Step 6 Reporting

The peer reviewer(s) will provide a detailed report of their findings to you and to CES. If your organisation does not meet all the PQASSO standards, you will be given an opportunity to make improvements.

### Step 7 Receiving the award

If your organisation is successful, you will receive the PQASSO Quality Mark in recognition of your achievement.

## Child Action Northwest: benefits of achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark

First established in 1886 and now employing 140 staff, Child Action Northwest (CANW) aims to promote the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Based in Blackburn, CANW provides an accessible range of services throughout the North West, including youth engagement support, training and development and family wellbeing. Through these activities they encourage children, young people and their families or carers to make a positive contribution and enable them to shape their own futures to reach their full potential.

CANW chose PQASSO over other quality models available because it was an all-encompassing, evidence-based system that would help them to demonstrate the quality of their services and enable them to create action plans for improvement where necessary. Ultimately, they felt they needed a system which would improve their long-term sustainability and efficiency, and one that would strengthen the organisation ready for further growth.

In implementing PQASSO, CANW organised a series of workshops to ensure that all staff were involved and committed. A PQASSO champion was allocated to each of the 12 quality areas and an initial self-assessment identified the areas where work was needed. Action plans for improvements were developed and carried out against a review calendar.

The advantages CANW identified from using PQASSO and gaining the PQASSO Quality Mark included organisational satisfaction, improved internal tools and procedures, and external recognition by funders and partner organisations.

*'We believe that achieving the PQASSO Quality Mark has led to an increase in contracts as we are able to provide better evidence of the quality of our services to commissioners and funders. We are now recognised as market leaders in our field of expertise in the North West area.'*

Child Action Northwest

For more information about the PQASSO Quality Mark, including information about fees, visit [www.pqassoqualitymark.org.uk](http://www.pqassoqualitymark.org.uk) or email [pqasso@ces-vol.org.uk](mailto:pqasso@ces-vol.org.uk). Chapter 7 tells you about other resources available to help you implement PQASSO.

## Chapter 7

# resources

This chapter sets out the resources which are available to support your work on PQASSO.

### PQASSO CD-ROM

The PQASSO CD-ROM is an information management tool that has been designed as a companion to the PQASSO workpack. The program stores and retrieves the information you collate, helping you to gauge instantly how well your organisation is doing against each of the quality standards. The CD-ROM helps you to:

- plan and monitor your overall PQASSO progress
- obtain a visual representation of your PQASSO progress
- better manage the self-assessment process
- record evidence
- develop action plans
- print PQASSO records in a variety of formats.

For those who are preparing for the PQASSO Quality Mark, the CD-ROM includes a feature to assist you in preparing the materials for your desktop review.

### PQASSO training

CES runs a programme of open and in-house training courses to help organisations to implement PQASSO. Courses are aimed at frontline organisations implementing PQASSO or getting ready for the PQASSO Quality Mark, and at professionals who wish to support others in implementing PQASSO (see *PQASSO mentors* below).

### PQASSO consultancy

CES offers consultancy support for organisations implementing PQASSO. Consultancy support can be helpful in a number of ways – for example:

- to interpret and understand the standards
- to help to plan the process of introducing and implementing PQASSO and its key stages
- to stimulate healthy debate and discussion
- to help to facilitate or guide self-assessment.

## **PQASSO mentors**

CES manages a network of PQASSO mentors who are licensed to provide training and support on PQASSO. CES licensed PQASSO mentors receive training in the use of PQASSO and in the skills and techniques to support organisations using the system. Licensed mentors are authorised to use CES training materials and also have access to ongoing mentoring training, support and information from CES. If you would like more information on PQASSO mentors in your area, please contact CES.

## **PQASSO Quality Mark resources**

Information about the PQASSO Quality Mark, including all the documentation you need in order to apply and go through the process, is available on the PQASSO Quality Mark website [www.pqassoqualitymark.org.uk](http://www.pqassoqualitymark.org.uk)

For information about any of the above, please visit the CES website at [www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk) or contact CES on 020 7713 5722.

# glossary

## **Achievement**

Performance demonstrated by some type of assessment or testing.

## **Assessment**

Judgement about an organisation's performance.

## **'CARD' evidence**

'CARD' stands for consistent, accessible, recent and dated. CARD evidence is used to support the PQASSO self-assessment process, and this should be demonstrated to external assessors.

## **Continuous improvement**

The process of doing, reviewing and improving that is part of an organisation's culture and built into its regular cycle of planning and delivery.

## **Contract**

A legally binding exchange of promises or an agreement between parties that the law will enforce. In the context of public service commissioning, a contract is conceived, procured and closely monitored by the commissioner. (This is different from a grant, where the voluntary or community organisation has greater control over the scope of the work and activities.)

## **Evidence (in PQASSO)**

A document, procedure or demonstrable fact to show that an organisation has met a particular indicator in PQASSO.

## **Evidence-based self-assessment**

A self-assessment process which uses evidence to support judgements made about an organisation's performance, usually against a set of quality standards.

## **Indicators**

Specific elements or 'building blocks' that make up a standard and that provide clues about whether a standard has been met.

## **Initial self-assessment**

A self-assessment process across all the PQASSO quality areas which makes a rough estimate about an organisation's performance, and thereby helps it decide in which order to carry out evidence-based self-assessments.

## **Peer review (in the PQASSO Quality Mark)**

Assessment of an organisation against the PQASSO standards by a trained reviewer from within the third sector, with a working knowledge of PQASSO.

## **PQASSO mentor**

An individual who is licensed by CES to provide PQASSO-related training and support to organisations.

### **Quality**

Quality is about doing better: better both in the services the organisation offers and in the way the organisation is run.

### **Quality areas**

Defined but interrelating areas of organisational life for which standards can be set.

### **Quality management system**

A systematic and consistent way of implementing quality in an organisation.

### **Quality standard**

An agreed level of service or organisational performance that should always be met.

### **Self-assessment**

A process by which people from within an organisation make judgements about its performance, usually against a set of quality standards.

### **Stakeholders**

The people or groups who are either affected by or who can affect the activities of an organisation. In third sector organisations they include users and beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, funders, investors, purchasers, other agencies, partners, Board members, donors, supporters and members, suppliers, regulatory bodies, policy makers and the wider community.

### **Users**

People who use or benefit from an organisation's services or activities.

## **Acronyms**

<b>CES</b>	Charities Evaluation Services
<b>CARD</b>	Consistent, Accessible, Recent, Dated
<b>EFQM</b>	European Foundation for Quality Management
<b>IIP</b>	Investors in People
<b>SMART</b>	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resourced, Time-bound

# about Charities Evaluation Services

Charities Evaluation Services (CES) is an independent charity with unrivalled expertise in monitoring, evaluation and quality assurance systems in the voluntary sector.

CES produces a range of publications, including PQASSO, the leading set of quality standards for third sector organisations of all sizes.

## How will CES work with you?

**Phone us on 020 7713 5722 for free advice.**

Our consultants will talk to you about your organisation's particular needs and offer you practical advice about monitoring, evaluation, self-evaluation and quality systems.

## What services does CES offer?

### In-house training

CES offers training in monitoring, evaluation, demonstrating outcomes and PQASSO and other performance related topics. Training courses can be run in-house and tailored specifically to the needs of your organisation.

### Open training

We also run a programme of training courses covering monitoring and evaluation, demonstrating outcomes and PQASSO from our accessible central London venue.

Contact us for our full training brochure on 020 7713 5722, or via our website [www.ces-vol.org.uk](http://www.ces-vol.org.uk) or email [enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk)

### Consultancy

Our consultancy service is flexible and provides support for organisations that want to understand and implement monitoring and evaluation, and PQASSO.

### External evaluations

CES has carried out evaluations of a large number of organisations over the last 20 years, as well as working with funders to evaluate their programmes and funding strategies.

For more information, contact CES on 020 7713 5722 or email [enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk)

## Other publications from Charities Evaluation Services

**First Steps in Quality**, 2nd edition (2010)

**First Steps in Monitoring and Evaluation** (2002)

**Next Steps: Monitoring and Evaluation on a Shoestring** (2011)

**Does Your Money Make a Difference?** (2010)

**Assessing Change: Developing and Using Outcomes Monitoring Tools** (2010)

**Practical Monitoring and Evaluation: A Guide for Voluntary Organisations**, 3rd edition (2009)

**How are you Doing? A Guide to Health Checks** (2009)

**Becoming More Effective: An Introduction to Monitoring and Evaluation for Refugee Organisations** (2008)

**Your Project and its Outcomes** (2007)

**Using ICT to Improve your Monitoring and Evaluation** (2008)

**Keeping on Track: A Guide to Setting and Using Indicators** (2008)

**Benchmarking Made Simple: A Step-By-Step Guide** (2008)

**Performance Improvement: A Handbook for Mentors** (2006)

**Managing Outcomes: A Guide for Homelessness Organisations** (2003)

**Evaluation Discussion Papers**

**PQASSO** 3rd edition (2008)

**PQASSO** 3rd edition CD ROM (2009)

For prices, please contact CES on 020 7713 5722 or email [enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ces-vol.org.uk)

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