

EFQM Validation

Applicant Guide

Overview

The objective of this guide is to help you prepare for the EFQM Validation. Following the advice in this guide will help you present your organisation's achievements effectively and help maximise the value added by the Validation report you receive at the end of the process.

Who is the EFQM Validation for?

Any organisation or business unit can apply at any time, regardless of their location, size or sector.

The EFQM Validation is a simple & easy step for organisations or units who are just beginning to explore ways to improve their business approach. A typical profile of an applicant organisation looks as follows:

- They have experience of introducing improvement initiatives but change is managed ad-hoc, now interested in taking an organisation-wide perspective.
- They measure their performance using mainly internal measures with little use of external comparisons as the basis for target setting.

The EFQM Validation process overview

The EFQM Validation can be organised any time of the year when it is more convenient for your organisation.



Phase 1: Conduct Self-Assessment

The first step to apply for the EFQM Validation is to conduct a self-assessment. Conducting a self-assessment will give an overview of your organisation's current capabilities against the EFQM Model.

EFQM recommends you use the EFQM Questionnaire online assessment available in the EFQM AssessBase.

You can also conduct the self-assessment using a different method and tool or facilitated by EFQM or one of our experienced consultants. If you want to know more about other options, please contact EFQM.

The EFQM Questionnaire will help you assess the approaches you have in place and determine where the key opportunities for improvement are. The maturity of these approaches and their impact on your ability to deliver your strategy should be considered when conducting the self-assessment. As a result of the self-assessment you will come up with a list of improvement areas. We will ask you to prioritise and identify the top 3 you will act upon.

After identifying the 3 improvement priorities, you need to agree on the improvement action owners. They will need to establish improvement teams to implement the appropriate improvements.

Phase 2: Prepare your submission

This is the moment where the decision to engage or not into the process is made. Preparing and discussing internally a first version of your project plan and an estimate of the associated cost and benefits will help you to take this decision.

Once you have decided to apply to the EFQM Validation, you need to prepare the first version of the Action Plan (submission document) and send it together with the signed Application Form.

Organisations applying for EFQM Validation are requested to produce two versions of the Action plan:

- Version 1 of the action plan template is produced after the self-assessment, prioritisation of your self-assessment outcome and selection of the three improvement projects before implementation of the projects. In this version you describe what you are planning to do against the RADAR elements.
- Version 2 is produced before the site visit when the improvement projects have been implemented. This version should reflect what has been implemented, what has been achieved. It should also demonstrate any changes and/or learning that took place.

Both versions are submitted to EFQM and to the Validator. The Version 1 should be submitted soon after the self-assessment is conducted and the Version 2 couple of weeks before the Validation Visit. EFQM will check the Version 1 in order to qualify your application. This is done to make sure that the three selected projects are in line with the output of the self-assessment and prioritisation has been done taking into consideration your strategy and available resources.

Phase 3: Validation Visit

Once EFQM has appointed the Validator, you will be introduced to him/her so that you can get to know each other better and start preparing the plan and logistics for the Validation Day.

The Validator might contact you to ask for clarification in case there is something unclear but most of this questions are discussed during the Validator's visit, which has a duration of 1 day.

During this one-day visit, employees at all levels in your organisation are interacting with the Validator (interviews, walkabouts...) even if they are not directly involved in one of the Improvement Projects.

The Validation visit is carried out in a very open and constructive atmosphere, it is the moment of truth where you create impressions for the Validator and supply him/her with tangible and intangible evidence.

The Validator normally arrives early in the morning and prepares for the day. Please make sure he/she has a room available where he/she can work. Normal practice is to take the Validator to visit your premises before officially starting the Validation Day.

- The Validation starts with the Opening Meeting between the Validator, the Management Team and some representatives of the improvement projects
 - Introduction of the Validator & applicant's representatives
 - Agenda of the day
 - Validation Process and Validation Day
 - Questions and Answers
- There is a meeting to discuss the self-assessment you conducted and how the prioritisation was done to select the 3 improvement priorities
- Each Improvement Project is discussed with the Owner of the project and 1-2 people involved in it
- If needed (depending on the size of the organisation), a Focus group is conducted with 4-5 people involved in the Improvement Projects
- The Validation Day ends with the Closing Meeting where the Validation result, a summary and proposed next steps are presented. This is also the time for questions and answers

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The standard agenda for the Validation day is presented below:

Time	Item	Description	People Involved
09.15 – 10.00	Visit + Preparation	Visit of the premises, see visible aspects of the projects and prepare opening	Validator and EFQM Validation project leader
10.00 – 10.15	Opening presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Introduction by Validator▪ Overview of Site Visit▪ Q&A	Management Team + representation from Improvement Team
10.15 – 11.00	Self-Assessment and Prioritisation	Discuss self-assessment and prioritisation process	Management Team and EFQM Validation project leader
11.00 – 11.15	Validator review time		
11.15 – 12.15	Improvement Project 1	Discuss approach, deployment and measurement	Owner + 1-2 people involved
12.15 – 13.00	Validator review time + Lunch		
13.00 – 14.00	Improvement Project 2	Discuss approach, deployment and measurement	Owner + 1-2 people involved
14.00 – 14.15	Validator review time		
14.15 – 15.00	Improvement Project 3	Discuss approach, deployment and measurement	Owner + 1-2 people involved
15.00 – 15.15	Validator review time		
15.15 – 16.00	Focus Group	Discuss Deployment of various projects	4-5 participants; affected by the Improvement projects
16.00 – 16.30	Validator review time		
16.30 – 17.00	Closing meeting	Validation result Q&A Next steps	Management Team + representation from Improvement Team

Hospitality Guidelines

We highly appreciate that applicants host the Validator as well as they can and that they treat him/her with respect. This is also the way we expect the Validator to behave.

Normal practice is to send someone to pick the Validator up in the airport or give clear indication on how to arrive to the hotel on the evening before the Validation Day.

Some courtesy gifts can also be offered to the Validator but of a small value. We want the applicant to treat the Validator according to normal business practices. Please don't treat him/her as VIP. Don't plan any event for him/her without the Validator's agreement as the Validation day is very demanding and normally the Validator travels just for 1 day.

Phase 4: Receive Feedback

After the Validation visit, the Validator finishes the written Report and sends it to EFQM. EFQM will then proofread it to check that it is consistent and value adding.

If the outcome is positive, we will send you a Congratulation email with:

- The outcome of the assessment
- The logos you can use for promotional use
- The certificate – we will send you a framed one once the spelling check is done
- A link to an online satisfaction survey – please complete it as we use the comments to improve the process
- The Validation Report that consists on:
 - Validator's Overall Comments (summary of the performance, re-occurring themes, Key Strengths and Areas for Improvements and recommendations)
 - Feedback on implementation of actions: impressions and observations per improvement project

When the content of the Validation Report is well understood and analysed, it is the time to take the recommendations into consideration and start working on the next steps.

Achieving “Validated by EFQM” recognition

The Validator makes the decision based on common sense. Each of your three improvement projects and their impact will be assessed using the RADAR logic. If the projects meet the majority of the RADAR attributes and you can demonstrate you managed the improvement projects in a structured fashion and you have made clear progress, you will receive the “Validated by EFQM” recognition.

At the end of the Validation, you will receive a feedback report detailing the strengths and opportunities for improvement observed.

Not successful organisations

Organisations that are not successful will receive guidance within their written report on where they need to improve before re-applying for EFQM Validation.

Applicants can request a new date for their Improvement Project Plan to be validated within 3 months of the first Site Visit. They will be able to use the same Improvement Project Plan or substituted Improvement Actions (as long as they were generated from the original Self-Assessment). Please contact the EFQM to discuss this option. A fee for the Site Visit will be payable.

If this option is not appropriate, re-applications for EFQM Validation will be accepted only if the process begins with a new Self-Assessment. By this stage nearly one year will have elapsed since the first Self-Assessment and it is important that a new process confirms that Improvement Actions are relevant.

It is recommended that an organisation, whether successful or not, should not go through more than 3 cycles of EFQM Validation as the benefits and learning are likely to have been maximised by this stage.

Documents to submit

In order to apply, you need to prepare and send the following documents to EFQM:

EFQM Validation Application Form

This is the official document you need to fill in and sign in order to officially apply. It is a one-page document where we ask you to provide the basic information about the organisation. You can send this form signed to EFQM any time in the year.

Action Plan

This is the document the Validator will use as the first input for Validation. The Action Plan contains the following parts:

- **Key Information:** This summarises the organisation's operating environment, structure, stakeholders and strategic objectives (2 pages)
- **Self-Assessment:** This describes the method used for the self-assessment and the lessons learnt (1 page)
- **Output from the Self-Assessment:** This lists the Key Strengths and Key Improvement opportunities identified during the self-assessment (1 page)
- **Improvement Project Description and Plan:** In this section you need to describe 3 improvement projects and the timing for each of them (6 pages)

A template to complete Action Plan is available; please ask EFQM.

Other useful information

EFQM Validation fee

The EFQM Validation fee varies depending on the size and scope of the organisation and the relationship with EFQM (member or non-member):

- **EFQM Members:** the fee is between 3.500 and 4.500 Euro
- **Non EFQM Members:** the fee is between 5.000 and 6.500 Euro

Other associated costs

On top of the application fee, please bear in mind that there are some other costs associated to the Validation process:

- **Travel and accommodation of the Validator for the Validation visit:** both the travel and accommodation of the Validator for the visit need to be covered by your organisation. We don't have any specification about the category of the hotel. For the travel, economy class is the standard for flights and other ways of transportation.
- **Other:** printing, translations (if needed) etc.

