

Frequently Asked Questions



WHY ENTER THE GOLD AWARDS FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE?

Q1. Why should I enter the Gold Awards?

The Gold Awards are completely independent, providing a valuable benchmark of certified organisations regardless of the certification body. Unlike other awards programs you will be able to compare your management success against other organisations with a three-tier recognition system that awards *Gold*, *Silver* or *Bronze* depending on the percentage score you achieve.

The three key benefits of entering the awards are as follows:

1. **Communicate your level of excellence:** The Gold Awards three-tier recognition system provides a measure of excellence that your customers can easily understand that differentiates your business from your competitors.
2. **Effect Cultural Change:** The process of maintaining certification is often seen by team members as just that... a process. The Gold Awards provide a tangible reward for your team with a recognition system that generates energy and engages them in continual improvement. The result is an integral and self-perpetuating culture of excellence.
3. **Benchmarking:** The Gold Awards three-tier recognition system provides a unique opportunity to benchmark your business against others in your industry or those that hold similar certification.

Q2. What do I receive as an entrant?

The Gold Awards adopt a process that encourages continual improvement by providing:

- every applicant with a professional, on-site assessment that brings a fresh perspective on where your organisation is doing well, and where you can improve.
- a detailed assessor's report at the conclusion of the awards process, outlining areas of strength together with areas for improvement and future direction.
- ongoing assistance from the Progressing Business Institute (PBI) with marketing and PR opportunities (membership is included with your entry fee.)
- attendance for all Gold level awardees at the National Recognition Workshop where key assessors provide insights into the very best initiatives they encountered during the assessments as well as coming trends and issues for business.
- an exclusive networking and "idea swap" opportunity for all Gold level awardees on the afternoon before the National Awards.

In addition to the benefits of continual improvement you will also tap into marketing and promotional opportunities by receiving:

- an Awards "seal" provided to you after the awards which can be used on your business collateral for three years.
- professional promotion alongside other awardees through e-bulletins and on the PBI and AOQ-QLD websites.
- the opportunity to be inducted into the prestigious Gold Awards Hall of Fame if the Gold Award benchmark is reached in three consecutive years.

Q3. Is the Awards process simply a duplication of what we already go through with our Auditor?

No. The Gold Awards add another dimension to the evaluation of your business by providing a higher level assessment of the management of your operation. With an assessment process based on the critical elements of Business Excellence, your business is benchmarked against other organisations including, most importantly, your competitors.

APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT FEES

Q1. What does the entry fee include?

The application and assessment fees include:

- an onsite assessment by an expert assessor, the time for which varies according to the size of an organisation, hence the scale of fees.
- professional written feedback
- membership for the Progressing Business Institute (PBI) until 30th June 2012

PBI is an organisation formed with the objective of assisting businesses Australia wide to improve their operations. PBI currently publishes, and distributes nationally, the official Journal of the Australian Organisation for Quality (Queensland) Incorporated (AOQ-QLD®) which examines and reports on key issues concerning Quality, Risk, WHS, HR, Organisational Health, Personnel Health, Environment, Knowledge, Ethics and Governance in Australia and abroad. PBI also conducts a number of national conferences including: AgedCare, Entrepreneur, EnergySummit, Lean Six Sigma, Pharma and PB Con as well as regular Quality Management training courses.

Q2. Our operation is a smaller department within a larger company? How do I determine the appropriate entry fee?

The entry fee is based on the length of time an onsite assessment is likely to take, hence the scale of fees according to the size of an organisation. A smaller department of a larger company may enter based on the number of employees in the department – this means that the awards assessment process will be limited to that department only.

YOUR TIME COMMITMENT

Q1. How long will it take to prepare an entry?

It depends on how much existing written information you have on hand regarding your Quality Management System. The written entry should be no more than eight (8) A4 pages plus the required accompanying documentation. As a rule of thumb, an entry will take about *one working day* to prepare and submit. There's no need to prolong the entry process by making your submission look pretty – with entry via email, simple documents are preferred and easier to download.

Q2. How long does the on-site assessment take? How does it differ to an audit?

The on-site assessment normally takes 4-6 hours. An assessment tool is sent to each applicant one week prior to the visit which streamlines the assessment process. This maximises the benefits to entrants, while minimising time investment and the impact on the resources of your business.

The onsite assessment determines where your operation lies along the excellence continuum, differing from an audit which determines simply compliance or non-compliance.

THE JUDGING PROCESS

Q1. How does the assessment process work?

The first step of the assessment process is a desk-top evaluation of the documents provided in accordance with the entry kit – this is not part of the scoring process but allows the assessors to plan your onsite visit.

An assessor will then contact you to arrange a time for your onsite visit which will take 4-6 hours. Site assessments are expected to take place late September.

All entrants will be scored across the same criteria, with a three-tier recognition system:

- entrants who score 75 percent or greater receive a Bronze Award
- entrants who score 80 percent or greater receive a Silver Award
- entrants who score 85 percent or greater receive a Gold Award and progress through to the national awards

Q2. What criteria do I need to address in the written entry?

You need to submit short responses that demonstrate how your organisation implements the eight critical elements for excellence - more information can be found on pages 14 and 15 of the [Entry Kit](#). Each response should be no longer than one page – to a maximum of eight (8) A4 pages in total.

Q3. Is the written entry judged?

No. The written submission gives the assessors an insight into your Business Excellence commitment and does not determine whether you will receive a Gold Award. The written submissions allow the assessors to prepare for the onsite evaluation, making the judging process more time efficient.

Q4. Which entrants are visited by the Assessors?

All entrants are visited by the assessors. As long as you complete the first step of the entry process by submitting the documentation requested in the Awards Entry Kit by 31 August, you will receive an onsite assessment.

Q5. Who are the Assessors?

Our assessors are selected for their management experience and technical knowledge to ensure that they are able to provide practical, meaningful feedback to each entrant as part of the evaluation process.

CERTIFICATION

Q1. Why do entrants need to be third party certified?

Requiring certification from a body recognised by the Australian federal government means that only organisations already committed to quality management are eligible to enter the awards. This requirement has intrinsic benefits to all entrants, providing a credible benchmark reserved exclusively for leaders in excellence.

Q2. Some awards documentation makes reference to AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000. What if we are certified against the 2008 standard?

That's perfectly fine. If your quality management system has been certified or upgraded to the 2008 amended version, you are eligible to enter the Awards.

Whilst AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008 has now officially replaced AS/NZS ISO 9001:2000, it is recognised that the new standard requires no changes to a QMS in order to comply and that some businesses may still be undergoing re-certification to the new standard.

SELECTING A CATEGORY

Q1. Can I enter more than one category?

Yes. You may enter any category with which your business corresponds and any business may enter the Gold Award for Business Excellence, provided their certification is issued by a JAS-ANZ accredited body. The Sustainable Environmental Management category is also open to businesses from any industry providing the business has achieved a certified reduction in emissions.

A list of JAS-ANZ accredited bodies can be found on the JAS-ANZ website: www.jas-anz.com.au

You are being assessed against your own level of management excellence, *not* against other entrants. One of the key points of difference of the Gold Awards for Business Excellence is its benchmarking points system, which means that all entrants that score above the very high bronze, silver and gold benchmarks are recognised at that level. This means that it doesn't matter which category you enter (if your organisation is eligible to enter more than one), or how many other entrants there are in the category, you will be recognised for the level of excellence you have achieved.

Q2. How do I know if we're eligible to enter a specific category?

A multitude of third party certifications exist including ISO certifications and other accreditations unique to certain industries. The JAS-ANZ website has a list of all organisations certified against Australian Standards (www.jas-anz.com.au) but other certifications exist which are not listed on this site. Some examples for each category are listed below and you are welcome to contact us if you are still unsure.

The Gold Award for Business Excellence:

If applying for the Gold Award for Business Excellence, then the certification must be accredited to ISO 9001.

The Gold Award for Laboratory Management Excellence:

Eligibility for this category includes all NATA accredited laboratories, diagnostic and technical facilities throughout Australia.

The Gold Award for Health/Aged Care Management Excellence:

Eligibility for this category includes, but is not limited to, businesses and organisations accredited under AGPAL or the *Core Standards for Safety and Quality in Healthcare and Standards for Residential Aged Care*.

The Gold Award for Aerospace Management Excellence: Eligibility for this category includes, but is not limited to, businesses and organisations certified against international standards AS9100, AS9110 and/or AS9120.

The Gold Award for Export Management Excellence: Any business exporting product is eligible to enter this category providing they hold third party certification. Whilst some businesses require specific certification depending on the product being exported, the most common certification for this category will be AS/NZS ISO 9001.

The Gold Award for Sustainable Environmental Management Excellence:

Eligibility for this category extends to all organisations that hold third party certification for effective emissions reduction programs.

The Gold Award for Sustainable Gardening Management Excellence:

Eligibility for this category includes, but is not limited to, NGIA, NIASA and ECOHORT accredited businesses throughout Australia.

The Gold Award for Software Systems and Engineering Management Excellence: Eligibility for this category is limited to businesses in the Software Systems and Software Engineering Industry and includes, but is not limited to, those certified under Australian Standards ISO/IEC 20000-1. Other certifications and accreditations may include ISO/IEC 27001, ITIL and COBIT.

ABOUT THE AWARDS

Q1. What is the history of the Awards? How long have they been running?

A. The Gold Awards for Quality were established in 1994 to encourage organisations in their pursuit of excellence, recognise sound company-wide management and reward overall business improvement. The Awards first began 17 years ago, when Quality Management as we know it today was in its infancy. As more and more organisations have shown a commitment to quality, the Awards have grown in prominence.

In 2004 the program was expanded to include recognition at both the state and national levels. In 2007 the Awards were re-named The Gold Awards for Business Excellence.

The Gold Awards are very different from any other awards that claim that “excellence” is the basis of their criteria. Gold Award entrants must prove their undisputable track record of seeking excellence by having a certified quality management system in place.

The Awards provide more than just the typical “pat on the back” of other award programs – they provide practical recommendations for all entrants to achieve further quality enhancement.

Q2. Have the awards changed from previous years?

A. As part of a program of continuous improvement, AOQ-QLD® engaged Awards Absolute to undertake a review that identified a number of areas where significant improvements could be made. These have been taken onboard and as a result:

- The entry process is more streamlined and entry is now easier
- The benefits to entrants and winners have been enhanced.
- All entrants will now receive written assessment feedback designed to help them reach that next level of performance.
- The Progressing Business Institute (PBI) is now the host, and Awards Absolute work in conjunction with PBI to promote the awards.