

# **Who Should Write Your Training Quality Standard Application?**

*A No-Nonsense Guide*

## Who Should Write Your Training Quality Standard Application?

It's a good question. It's also one to which there are some very straightforward answers.

First, however, let's think about reality and why quite a few applications that are submitted – be they for Part A or for Part B – just don't present their organisations in the best light.

To put things bluntly, some applications let the organisation looking for certification down.

There are plenty of reasons why this happens, but usually it's to do with how the application writing process has been set up, and how the responsibilities for completing the application have been handed out.

- Often the writing task lands on the shoulders of someone who is not suited to the job and who doesn't want to do it. It's worth remembering that just because someone has responsibility for employer engagement in his or her job description, it doesn't mean that this is the best person to write the application.
- What also often happens is that the person handing out the task doesn't appreciate the size, scale and scope of the job. He or she reasons that the organisation has written bids and tenders in the past and that every one knows the ropes about self-assessment reports. As a result the application writing task becomes just something else that someone has to do. The differences between this task and other writing tasks are ignored.

### *So what happens?*

After several weeks that are peppered with lots of stress, anxiety, late night and weekend writing sessions, along with panic-stricken rewrites, an application which doesn't do you justice goes off just before the deadline for submission.

This is the point at which you say:

“ I wish we'd made a better job of this.”

Here is some guidance to help you to make sure you never have to say those words.

### *The truth of the matter*

Good application writing is built around some simple truths. Some of these are:

1. The Training Quality Standard application needs more than one person working on it.
  2. There are four important roles to be filled before the writing begins.
  3. The people taking on the different roles must work together as a team to produce a good application.
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### *Who should be involved?*

However small your organisation you need at least **two** people sharing the responsibility for producing your application.

There are four important roles so, if possible, build a team of four people. These roles are:

1. principal writer
2. principal reviewer
3. principal evidence gatherer
4. project manager.

Tasks may be shared, and some people will undertake more than one role during the course of the application writing. However, someone must have overall responsibility for each of these tasks.

**The only rule you must follow in this is that the principal writer must not also be the principal reviewer.**

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### *What does each person do?*

#### *The principal writer*

The text that goes into the application is the major responsibility of this person. He or she will have oversight of the writing of the whole application and will probably write most of what goes into the final document.

This person must be able to write.

Find someone who enjoys writing and who can write in the style required by the assessment process.

One of his or her jobs will be to ensure that the document reads well. This person will also ensure different sections of the document do not contradict each other and that there is consistency in approach and writing style throughout.

*The principal evidence gatherer*

This is a very important role and it is easy to overlook its importance.

This person must have a good knowledge of the organisation and its recent history. He or she will know what the organisation does well, how its managers interact with employers, what the organisation says about itself to the world and so on. This person will need to know, or to be able to access, lots of examples of good practice.

The quality of the application depends on someone bringing the organisation's successes to the table when the different sections of the document are being written. That's why the role of principal evidence gatherer is so important.

It is this person's responsibility to make sure that the principal writer has the best information with which to make a case.

*The principal reviewer*

This person has a very important role and one that is often overlooked or forgotten or squeezed out of the process altogether.

This person will check that the document makes sense to a reader who does not have knowledge of the organisation seeking assessment. The principal reviewer will try to avoid getting bogged down in the detail of the application and to see if overall it makes sense.

This person must try to think like an assessor, asking all the time if what has been written would make sense to an assessor.

The principal reviewer will work very closely with the principal writer. However, it is important to remember that reviewing takes time and that reviewers are likely to ask for revisions to be made.

There needs to be time in the schedule to accommodate these requests.

*The project manager*

The project manager will be a senior manager in the organisation and will manage the application writing process. This is an important responsibility. Without someone guiding the application in this way writing it is likely to be viewed as just another activity to be fitted into a busy schedule.

One of the project manager's responsibilities will be to decide when the application is ready for submission.

The project manager will also take responsibility for keeping people on track.

He or she will need to be able to insist that resource is allocated to the application writing process and that intermediate deadlines are met.

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*Working together*

The application writing team will need to work together and, of course, give each other support.

Following this guidance will make application writing more straightforward but there is more that you need to think about if you are going to get things right.

Margaret Adams

*Interested in learning more about preparing for your Training Quality Standard assessment? Then visit: [www.attractmorebusiness.co.uk](http://www.attractmorebusiness.co.uk)*