



Capital Quality Limited

**Investors in People Retaining Recognition
Guidelines and Sample Action Plans**

Advice for Organisations



► Introduction

The Retaining Recognition process applies only to organisations found not to be meeting the Standard at Post-Recognition Review, usually as a result of organisational change or because of the need to meet the additional requirements of the 2005 Standard. As long as there is a genuine commitment to return to the Standard, this process allows organisations to remain recognised and removes the threat of immediate de-recognition. The organisation will need to make a firm commitment from the highest level to return to the Standard and has to be visited by the Assessor at intervals of **no more than 12 months apart**, until the Standard is fully met again. Organisations can only remain in the retaining recognition process for **a maximum of 2 years**.

The Retaining Recognition process does not apply to organisations that have yet to be assessed and recognised in their own right. Organisations adopting the building block approach, who are unsuccessful at the strategic assessment, cannot enter the Retaining Recognition process as a single entity, as the organisation has not yet been recognised as a whole. In cases like this, the Assessor should follow the Retaining Recognition process with each of the recognised sub-units that do not meet the Standard.

If the organisation does not meet the Standard at the time of Post-Recognition Review it must enter into the Retaining Recognition process regardless of when the review is carried out. It is not permitted for organisations to disregard the outcomes of the review visit and/or continue being recognised without entering into the Retaining Recognition process until their three-year deadline expires.

► Can the gaps in evidence be addressed within a 3-month timescale?

If the Assessor and the organisation agree that the gaps in evidence are relatively small and could be addressed within **3 months** of the last day on-site, then the organisation does not have to enter the retaining recognition process. Where this is the case the Assessor should clearly identify the action required in his/her report and arrange with the organisation to return at an agreed date in less than three months to identify if the issues have been addressed. A short follow-up report as an appendix to the original report should then be produced.

If the organisation is still unable to satisfy the Assessor that the Standard is met then the Retaining Recognition process needs to be followed and no further extensions are



allowed. If this is the case, an action plan must be presented to the Recognition Panel within **3 weeks** of the last day on-site.

▶ **The Retaining Recognition Process**

There must be a genuine, top-level commitment to return to the Standard and the organisation should consider how it will demonstrate this to both the Assessor and Recognition Panel. Based upon the Assessor's feedback, the organisation must devise an action plan setting out how it intends to return to Standard.

Having given feedback and provided a written report to the organisation, the Assessor will maintain contact with the organisation to agree its action plan to return it to the Standard. The Assessor's role is not to devise the action plan (this is advisory work), but to give feedback on whether the action plan, if implemented fully, will return the organisation to the Standard.

Whilst there is no set format for the action plan, it should set out clearly what action will be taken to address the assessor's feedback, with 'specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound' milestones.

Organisations should expect to be charged a minimum of 0.5 days at the national rate to cover the Assessor's time reviewing and presenting of the action plan to the Recognition Panel. If additional Assessor time is incurred in connection with the retaining recognition, this may be chargeable and should be agreed in advance between the organisation and Assessor. The Assessor must also advise CQL of any charges agreed.

Additionally, the person at the top of the organisation should sign a covering letter prior to submitting the action plan to the Assessor and Recognition Panel. This demonstrates top-level commitment to return to the Standard.

To ensure that the credibility of the Standard is being maintained, the organisation must inform employees that it is not meeting the Standard, and that an action plan has been developed to address the gaps found during the review visit. Communication with employees should be a feature of the action plan. There is no specific need to communicate the content of the action plan, although it may be good practice to do so.



Investors in People UK stipulate that the Recognition Panel must approve this action plan no more than **3 months after the last day on-site**. To ensure these timescales are met CQL require that the action plan be sent to the Assessor for initial approval within **2 months after the last day on-site**. This will then allow for amendments to be made and approved, if necessary.

Following the approval of the action plan by the Recognition Panel, the action plan is implemented. The Recognition Panel Members and the Assessor should agree the timing of review visits to monitor the achievement of the action plan, visits coinciding with the expected achievements of milestones and no longer than **12 months apart**.

However, the requirement for an Assessor visit to take place at least once every 12 months does not imply an automatic entitlement to a 12-month timescale. Assessors and Recognition Panel members should use their judgement to decide whether more frequent visits are needed: due regard to the cost implications should be balanced with the need to ensure that the credibility of the Standard is preserved. The frequency of visits should be influenced by the action plan and clearly identified in writing to both the Assessor and the organisation. In some circumstances it might be appropriate for the Assessor to revisit the organisation after 3, 6 or 9 months.

It is absolutely essential that any visits to the organisation have a clear purpose and in nearly every case would involve reviewing progress against the action plan by interviewing people to ensure outcomes are being met. Feedback should be provided at the end of any visit.

Applications for these reviews should be submitted in the usual way via the Adviser and CQL should be kept informed. Any chargeable activity must be agreed beforehand by both the organisation and CQL and be part of the approved strategy for retaining recognition. Written reports, detailing the organisation's progress, will need to be presented (usually virtually) to the Recognition Panel at the agreed interval(s).

All retaining recognition action plans are presented to fixed Panels, and Assessors and Advisers are made aware of the fixed panel date in the letter sent to retaining



recognition clients by CQL. This date should be entered into the Assessor's diary to avoid any potential conflict of dates that may jeopardise the retaining recognition process.

If the organisation has returned to the Standard, a report recommending recognition for a further 3 years will be considered, usually by the original Recognition Panel. However, if the organisation does not make significant progress against its own action plan, i.e. it fails to meet agreed milestones, such that its commitment is in doubt, the Assessor can make a recommendation to the Recognition Panel that the organisation be derecognised.

The Recognition Panel must confirm in writing when the organisation has, or has not, returned to the Standard.

▶ **Retaining Recognition – Internal Review**

Internal Review evidence can be used to monitor progress against the organisation's action plan. The External Assessor can then consider this evidence along with evidence they collect themselves, when deciding whether the Standard has once again been met.

▶ **Retaining Recognition – Profile**

If an organisation enters into Retaining Recognition as a result of its Profile review it will still receive the report and charts, but its results will not be included in the databank. If an organisation chooses to have a Profile review whilst it is in the Retaining Recognition process, those results will only be included in the databank when it fully meets the Standard.

▶ **Retaining Recognition Action Plans**

Examples of Retaining Recognition action plans are attached to these guidelines. Please note that these examples are for information only. Whilst there is no set format for an action plan, it should set out clearly what action will be taken to address the Assessor's feedback, with specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound milestones.

▶ Any Questions?

If you have any queries please contact your Adviser or any of the CQL Assessment and Recognition Team on 020 7492 5901.

Example Number One - Investors in People Action Plan for an Organisation

Month 2006

Issue Relating to Maintaining the Standard	Action Required	By Whom	By When	Ind	Outputs Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ While most believe their contribution is recognised some felt there could be more incentive/reward for excellent performance and effort. ■ The performance review process is not fully embedded throughout the organisation. Whilst parts of the organisation make excellent use of the process to provide feedback, agree priorities and produce development plans, others recognise “We are not as good as we should be owing to lack of time.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Promote culture of recognition for jobs well done. Team Leaders to mention particular individuals at monthly operations meetings, etc. Re-view reward structures. Consider how performance is rewarded and merit schemes. ■ Ensure all appraisals carried out within established time-frame. ■ Audit cross section of appraisals to ensure quality. Feedback to managers on good practice and areas for improvement 	All Managers	Dec 2006	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Staff do agree that excellent performance and effort are recognised and rewarded ■ Improvement in quality and quantity of appraisals. ■ Better “buy in” by staff to appraisals process.
		All Managers	Mar 2006/2007	1,2,5	
		HR	Dec 2006		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Managers recognise that some people have not had a regular review and that XXX have a more structured training programme than YYY. XXXs confirmed they are encouraged to follow the corporate model for professional development as required by their professional body, comprising objectives, essays and mentors while others the approach is more ad hoc. ■ People talked of differing levels of support available for their development and consequently some did question the equality of opportunity in respect of development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure all staff are appraised annually - produce annual report on status of appraisals across business. ■ Encourage all staff to maintain record of Continuing Professional Development. ■ Make availability of access to support and to training/development opportunities more transparent. ■ Monitor staff perceptions to assess improvement. ■ Audit cross-section of appraisals to ensure quality, including back-track to identify staff development progress. 	J Smith	Dec 2006	3,5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Better understanding by people of the opportunities for support and development. ■ Enthusiasm in staff for continued development.
		All Managers	Dec 2006		
		B Bloggs	Mar 2007		
		All Managers	Dec 2006		
		HR	Mar 2006 Dec 2007		

Issue Relating to Maintaining the Standard	Action Required	By Whom	By When	Ind	Outputs Expected
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ People are unclear about the big picture and future direction. “We are having to reinvent ourselves therefore some people are not sure where we are headed” senior manager. Consequently, people tend to identify with their current project rather than how they might sell and support the work of the whole unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regular staff meetings to explain future direction of company. ■ Team Leaders to cascade information from monthly operations meetings and to record this for monitoring purposes. ■ For 2007 plan people to be involved in contributing their ideas to the business plan as it is developed and in agreeing their team and individual objectives 	<p>John Smith</p> <p>All Managers</p> <p>All Managers</p>	<p>Feb 2007 Nov 2006</p> <p>Mar 2007 Dec 2006</p> <p>Dec 2006 Mar 2007</p>	<p>1,6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The company strategy for realising our potential is fully understood and appreciated by all staff.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ As highlighted in Indicator 1, the management team are aware that people tend to focus on the “here and now” that is completing the project on time, rather than the contribution they are making to the development of a profitable centre of excellence based on technical competence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Company mission statement to be broadcast and explained. People to be involved in developing and agreeing team and individual objectives. 	<p>B Bloggs</p> <p>All Managers</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p> <p>Mar 2007</p>	<p>1,6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All people understand their contribution to company success.

Example Number Two - Investors in People Action Plan

Ref	Action Point	By whom	By when	Expected Outcomes	IIP Ind
1	<p>Aims and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ZZZ Business Plan to include Divisional Objectives, consulting more widely during the planning process 	<p>Div Heads, Consultation Groups, e.g. DST.s</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Improved understanding by all staff of business objectives and how they contribute towards achieving them through regular feedback. 	<p>1,5</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Introduce Divisional and team business plans, which have to be referenced to the ZZZ Business Plan and linked to the training plan. People to be involved in developing these for their team and agreeing their own objectives. Ensure training plans identify resources and desired impact, 	<p>SMT, Group and Unit managers, T&D Manager</p>	<p>Dec 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ People can describe how their team and individual objectives support the overall business plan identifies high level and priority corporate training needs. 	<p>1,2</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a reward and recognition policy. 	<p>Head of HR and SMT</p>	<p>Mar 2007</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public celebration of achievement and more acknowledgement and reward for work and communications. 	<p>6</p>
4	<p>Developing the management structure:</p> <p>Senior managers become role models of the desired management capabilities and become more visible and accessible by attending Divisional and team meetings as available and at least quarterly; being resourced at induction and management development programmes and visiting staff at regional offices.</p>	<p>Board and SMT</p>	<p>With immediate effect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Senior managers showing commitment to good practice of people management principles and to staff training and development. 	<p>5</p>

Ref	Action Point	By whom	By when	Expected Outcomes	IIP Ind
5	<p>Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a communications strategy 	<p>Communications Team</p>	<p>Mar 2007 Dec 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective communication that is open, transparent and relevant, both within and outside ZZZ. 	<p>1</p>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Divisional and team meetings ensure that all members are sufficiently confident and empowered to contribute both to the agenda and the discussion, with opportunities for feedback and sharing of good practice and for taking decisions on the basis of delegated authority. 	<p>All managers</p>	<p>Mar 2007 Oct 2006</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A culture where people feel encouraged to contribute without recrimination and to be empowered and involved in decision-making at an appropriate level. Effective communication about ZZZ, its business and objectives. Sharing of learning and development practice is a regular item on meeting agendas. 	<p>2,6,7&8</p>

Example Number Three – Investors in People Action Plan

Planning and Strategy					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy for improving the company's performance and draft business plan. 	SMT	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written strategy and plan to be compiled after company planning day and follow up events. 	Mar 2007	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Company planning day to be organised to allow vision of company to be presented and also express wider picture and clarify identity of company. 	AG, MN,TJ	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good turnout for planning day. Staff feel that they have contributed their ideas to the business plan, they are aware of all company objectives and current and future business plans. All staff given written summary about discussions from planning day. 	Mar 2007	I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy for staff development. 	SMT	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy to be consistent across the company to include head office induction, appraisals, and use of individual trainers. Strategic learning and development plan defines resources and desired impact. 	March 2007 and ongoing	1,2,3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop structured Training Plan for all staff linked to business objectives 	SMT	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire sent to staff to evaluate opportunity for development – review periodically to check equality of access. 	December 2006 and then ongoing	2,3,8
Training and Development					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to be collated and evaluated at Office level from Individual Training Plans developed as part of appraisals. 	Managers	Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular reviews of Training plans by Head Office and Office Managers to assess outstanding issues. 	Feb 2007 and then ongoing	2,8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to be collated and evaluated at organisational level. 	AJ,TJ	SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training to be planned at organisational level to enable top level assessment, evaluation and cost –benefit analysis against expected resources costs and desired impact. Evaluation used to inform next year's business strategy. New training evaluation forms to be developed. 	December 2006 and then ongoing	9,10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New training assessment sheets to be circulated and used for evaluation of training. 	AJ, DL	All managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All training assessed by manager and kept in Personal Development Folder (PDF) – reviewed at appraisal. Development Team to collate from all offices, which can then be linked back to Business Plan. 	December 2006 and then ongoing	8,9,10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New restructured job descriptions linked to business objectives. Ensure clear levels of responsibility and accountability are defined. 	HR Manager	All managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Job description kept in PDP. 	November 2006	1,7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify desired capabilities for managers. 	HR manager/all managers	SMT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once capabilities have been agreed, managers need to be measured and any development needs addressed. Monitor effectiveness of managers in practice and improvements they have made as individuals. 	January 2007 2006 and then ongoing	4,5,10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Care Programme. 	Devpt Team		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback from courses, performance review at appraisal. Improved Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). 	January 2007 and then ongoing	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated training supervisor is required to cover each office. 	Devpt Team	All managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly visits made by trainers to individual offices. 	December 2006 and then ongoing	8,9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure PDP's are kept up to date including all internal development and a copy of the business plan. 	All managers	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written charter for internal training. PDF's to contain written evaluation of development activities. Reviewed at appraisals. 	December 2006 and then ongoing	1,2,8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define “development not linked to formal courses” for PDF notes. 	Devpt Team, all managers	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education from company planning day and road shows. Three regional road shows in separate regions of country to inform staff of current developments. 	December 2006	1,9,10

Communications					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure praise from / visibility of SMT and the management team is consistent across the offices. 	SMT	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raised awareness of company goals and performance. Use of regional road shows. 	November 2006 and ongoing	1,6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop structured system for team meetings, minutes. Promote good practice in holding meetings that encourage staff to contribute. 	All managers	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team meetings monitored via KPI database. Minutes distributed and displayed in office. 	November 2006 and ongoing	1,6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all staff receive company newsletter via various media. 	All managers	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor distribution of newsletters. Distribute newsletter in format decided by individual units. 	September 2006 and then ongoing	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop office KPI's to clarify objectives and staff contribution. 	SMT All managers	All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued awareness of performance and targets at office level. 	September 2006 and then ongoing	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Meetings. 	HA	Marketing division Unit managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes kept of all marketing meetings. 	September and ongoing	10
Appraisals					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office managers to be appraised in September followed by their staff in May and October. 	SMT HR manager	All managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appraisals logged onto HR database. Individual training needs put into Office Training Plans. HR to audit appraisals to check for consistency. 	September 2006 and then ongoing	5,2