



Shield of Honour 2025 Question Set and Marking Scheme

Background

This marking scheme relates to the written application component of the 2025 Shield of Honour scheme. The final marks for each submission will be determined by reference to applicants' performance in the written application only. The results of the Five Star Audit process will not be considered other than as a right of entry to the awards.

Please note that the marking descriptors are indicative by nature. For example, two organisations may adopt differing approaches to the written application and score equally well. Nonetheless, high-scoring organisation will typically answer all aspects of the question, clearly following the marking scheme, provide site-specific references (evidenced and referenced through the audit report) and fully utilise, but not exceed the specified word allowance per response.

Scoring criteria

- A maximum of 60 marks are available for the written application. Applicants must score a minimum of 45 marks to remain eligible for the award.
- A minimum of two individual responses must be scored within the top mark band (11-15 marks).
- Submissions will become ineligible for the Shield of Honour award should any individual responses be scored within the lower mark band (0-5 marks).
- Responses to each sub-question must not exceed 750 words per sub-question (i.e. 3,000 words overall per submission).
- The two optional questions for the Innovation and Development award will be marked separately by a panel. The grades for these questions will not be included in the overall score of the main application.

New for 2025, a sample of applicants will be randomly selected to validate the responses given on their application in a virtual interview. This selection will be made following the application submission deadline on the 23 September 2025 and the selected applicants will be notified with a MS Teams placeholder invite for the week beginning on the 29 September 2025.

	11-15 marks	6-10 marks	0-5 marks
1.	<p>With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit:</p> <p>A full description of how the organisation ensures full (all) employee participation, and a full description/discussion of how these groups were identified i.e. RACI, employee job family assessment etc.</p>	<p>An adequate description of how the organisation ensures full (all) employee participation. Some reference to how these groups were identified.</p>	<p>A basic description of how the organisation ensures full (all) employee participation. No reference to how these groups were identified.</p>
	<p>Explain how the site ensures the participation of all employee groups in the establishment and/or continual improvement of any health and wellbeing programme.</p> <p>A full discussion of the methods used to encourage and facilitate participation i.e. focus groups, health and wellbeing forums, suggestion schemes and a full discussion of the arrangements made to enable this.</p> <p>The response is supported with clear examples of when and how this is done and how these contributed to continuous improvement and in turn incident reduction/cultural improvement(s).</p> <p>All examples are clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>Some reference to the methods used to encourage and facilitate participation but lacking depth.</p> <p>The response is supported with some examples of when and how this is done and how these contributed to continuous improvement and in turn incident reduction/cultural improvement(s).</p> <p>Some examples are clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>Some reference to the methods used to encourage and facilitate participation but lacking in discussion.</p> <p>The response is supported with some examples of when and how this is done but lacking reference to how these contributed to continuous improvement and in turn incident reduction/cultural improvement(s).</p> <p>Few or no examples are clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>
2.	<p>With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit:</p> <p>A full explanation of how Senior Management is defined at the site and how they both lead and manage the health and wellbeing agenda.</p>	<p>An adequate explanation of how Senior Management is defined at the site and some discussion of how they lead and/or manage the health and wellbeing agenda.</p>	<p>A basic explanation of how Senior Management is defined at the site – no reference to how they both lead and manage the health and wellbeing agenda.</p>
	<p>Describe how the senior management team lead and manage so as to improve the health and wellbeing culture of the organisation.</p> <p>Identifies the significant contribution this community makes to compliance, culture and engagement on health and wellbeing matters and discusses the role they play in driving continual improvement both now and in the future.</p> <p>The response is supported with clear examples of the methods used to determine relevance and the actions taken (planned or actual) to drive continual improvement of your health and wellbeing performance at the site.</p> <p>Discusses in detail continual improvement and the developing health and wellbeing agenda.</p> <p>All examples clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>Identifies the role, not fully appreciating the contribution, this community makes to compliance, culture and engagement on health and wellbeing matters. Shows some appreciation of the short term/long term considerations required.</p> <p>Does not adequately discuss continual improvement and the developing health and wellbeing agenda.</p> <p>Some examples clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>Identifies the role, not fully appreciating the contribution, this community makes to compliance but lacks discussion around culture and engagement on health and wellbeing matters.</p> <p>No reference to timescale(s). Does not reference continual improvement and the future landscape.</p> <p>Few or no examples are related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit</p>

3.	<p>With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit:</p> <p>Explain how you intend to use the output of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit to positively impact and improve health and wellbeing performance and associated organisational culture in the next year.</p>	<p>A full explanation clearly demonstrating how organisational performance will be improved both operationally and culturally.</p> <p>A range of relevant examples of campaigns, programmes and/or initiatives that will further drive focussed performance improvement and cultural engagement – reference to a range of measures e.g. employee engagement surveys, absence statistics, feedback forums, external organisations i.e. Glassdoor.</p> <p>All examples are clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>An adequate explanation demonstrating how organisational performance will be improved both operationally and culturally.</p> <p>A range of relevant examples of campaigns, programmes and/or initiatives that will further drive focussed performance improvement and cultural engagement. Some reference to measures/metrics.</p> <p>All or most examples are related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>A basic explanation of how organisational performance will be improved both operationally and culturally.</p> <p>Limited relevant examples of campaigns, programmes and/or initiatives that will further drive focussed performance improvement and cultural engagement.</p> <p>No reference to measures/metrics.</p> <p>Few or no examples are related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>
4.	<p>With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit:</p> <p>Identify the most significant Five Star Wellbeing Audit outcomes for your organisation and explain how relevant recommendations will be used in ensuring longer term continual improvement of your health and wellbeing performance.</p>	<p>A full description of how the organisation identifies the significant outcomes and relevant recommendations and how these are used to drive longer term continual improvement in your health and wellbeing performance.</p> <p>The response is supported with clear examples of the methods used to determine relevance and the actions taken (planned or actual) to drive continual improvement of your health and wellbeing performance and 'value-add' post-audit.</p> <p>All examples are clearly related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>An adequate description of how the organisation identifies the significant outcomes and relevant recommendations and how these are used to drive continual improvement in health and wellbeing performance.</p> <p>The response is supported with an example of the method used to determine relevance to drive continual improvement of health and wellbeing performance and 'value-add' post-audit.</p> <p>All or most examples are related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>	<p>A basic description of how the organisation identifies the significant outcomes and relevant recommendations and how these are used to drive continual improvement in health and wellbeing performance.</p> <p>The response is not supported with any clear examples of the approach used to drive continual improvement of health and wellbeing performance and 'value-add' post-audit.</p> <p>Few or no examples are related to the outcomes of the recent Five Star Wellbeing Audit.</p>