**2020-2021**

# EXAMINER HANDBOOK



 **Updated v2 Nov. 1, 2020 by D. Iorio**

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## ABOUT THE EXAMINER HANDBOOK

### Purpose

The Examiner Handbook provides a summary of basic information about the Kentucky Center for Performance Excellence (KyCPE) Award Program and how KyCPE evaluates applicant organizations. This handbook summarizes your role in the KyCPE evaluation process and your responsibilities as an examiner.

Please read this handbook carefully after receiving your acceptance to the Board of Examiners. Key examiner specific information is highlighted in yellow. Pay particular attention to the role of examiners covered on pages 5-14. If you are not able to commit to serve and execute the tasks outlined, please notify either of the KyCPE contacts indicated below immediately.

Use the handbook to prepare for examiner training and as a reference throughout the evaluation process. Keep in mind, this is just an overview. Detailed process instructions will be provided during the two-day training course.

**Contact KyCPE** [www.KYCPE.org](http://www.kycpe.org/)

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### Contents and Format

The handbook contains the following sections:

* About the Examiner Handbook
* The Kentucky Center for Performance Excellence Award Program
* KyCPE Board of Examiners
* Evaluation Process Map
* Evaluation Process Overview

### Request for Comments and Suggestions

KYCPE revises the Examiner Handbook annually or as needed. Please contact KYCPE with revision suggestions.

### Definitions

ADLI - The four factors used to evaluate process elements of the Baldrige Excellence Framework. The acronym stands for *approach*, *deployment*, *learning*, and *integration.*

Applicant – an organization which seeks recognition and feedback as it relates to the Baldrige Excellence Framework.

Baldrige Excellence Framework – a guide that is a nonprescriptive leadership and management guide that facilitates a systems approach to achieving organization wide excellence.

Baldrige Performance Excellence Program – the overseers of the nation’s only Presidential award for performance excellence.

Board of Examiners – trained personnel who evaluate applications using the Baldrige Excellence Framework.

Consensus – a [generally](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/generally) [accepted](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/accepted) [opinion](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/opinion) or [decision](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/decision) among a [group](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/group) of people

ERB – Examiner Review Board a specialized group of KyCPE examiners who review the feedback report after it has been turned in to KyCPE by the examiner team.

Feedback Report – the result of the evaluation of an application by a team of examiners. It contains a cover letter, the award level and scoring band information, key themes, item evaluations and the appendix

LeTCI – the four factors used to evaluate results elements of the Baldrige Excellence Framework. They are levels, trends, comparisons, and integration.

No Conflict of Interest – an attestation that there is not a situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made as an examiner.

NDA – Non-Disclosure Agreement - an agreement not to make something known; this is required before an application evaluation can start

Opportunity of Improvement - a situation where the evidence presented indicates additional effectiveness or robustness might be possible with a modified approach.

Strength - a beneficial quality or attribute.

## THE KENTUCKY CENTER FOR PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE AWARD PROGRAM

###  Background

The Kentucky Center for Performance Excellence (KyCPE) was founded in 2004 as a public-private partnership (sponsored by those it serves). KyCPE’s purpose is to promote and support performance improvement in all Commonwealth organizations. KyCPE is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation governed by an independent board of directors and staffed by volunteers.

The KyCPE Award Program is modeled after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program.

Public Law 100-107, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Improvement Act of 1987, was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan on August 20, 1987. For the first ten years, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award was limited to three eligibility categories: service, manufacturing, and small business. On October 30, 1998, President Bill Clinton signed legislation establishing two additional eligibility categories: health care and education. On October 5, 2004, President George W. Bush signed legislation establishing an additional category for nonprofit organizations, including government.

The Baldrige Award is managed by the [Baldrige Performance Excellence Program](https://www.nist.gov/baldrige) at the

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), U. S. Department of Commerce.

### Purpose

The [Kentucky Center for Performance Excellence](http://www.kycpe.org/) encourages improvement of performance in all sectors of the economy by establishing guidelines that can be used by organizations to evaluate their own performance. In doing so, organizations may apply for an award. KyCPE also shares information, with interested organizations, detailing how role model organizations are able to achieve outstanding performance and improve competitiveness. The concept of performance excellence applies to organizations of all types and sizes.

The **Vision**: Propel Kentucky organizations to thrive through performance excellence.

The **Mission** of KyCPE is to provide the resources, expertise and recognition to organizations across the Commonwealth, to enable them to achieve impactful results.

The Mission is accomplished through KyCPE’s application and feedback process, education and training of examiners, the sharing of best practices within the Baldrige community, and the recognition of achievements.

The **Values** of KyCPE are:

* Customer Focused
* Ethical
* Integrity
* Stewardship
* Results Orientation
* Transparency
* Respect for Others

### Eligibility

The KyCPE Award Program provides opportunities for organizations that want to measure their progress as they strive to improve performance. The program applies to all types of organizations including manufacturing, service, health care, schools, government, for-profit, not-for-profit, small, large, growing, and mature. In short, the KyCPE Award Program is an effective tool for any organization interested in improving quality, productivity, profits, and competitiveness.

### The *Baldrige Excellence Framework*

The *Baldrige Excellence Framework is* a document that describes the characteristics of world-class organizations. It is the foundation of the KyCPE Award Program. Organizations apply to the Award Program by answering a series of questions outlined in the Framework. These questions help the organization look deep inside its systems and processes.

The Framework may be used by organizations as a form of self-analysis, but organizations that apply to the KyCPE Award Program benefit from the additional value of an external review by a team of KyCPE examiners.

As an examiner, you will work with a team to both independently, and as a group, evaluate an applicant’s responses to the Framework questions to determine where there is alignment and where there are gaps. Through this evaluation, you will identify the applicant’s strengths, as well as its opportunities for improvement.

At the end of the evaluation, your team’s findings will be assembled into a Feedback Report. This report is a key tool that the applicant will use to improve its performance.

### Framework Formats

The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program publishes three versions of the *Baldrige Excellence Framework*: Business/Nonprofit, Education, and Health Care.

KyCPE makes available all the Baldrige Framework documents for examiners. Information about the Award Program and application forms can be found

at the KyCPE web site. [www.KyCPE.org](http://www.kycpe.org/)

The Framework are continuously being updated and improved. KyCPE applicant organization should use the current year’s Framework version that applies to their business.

Before you begin an evaluation, be sure to note which version of the Framework is being used (this information will be on the organization’s application form), so you assess the organization’s application against its chosen Framework. KyCPE will provide you the appropriate Framework book for use in your evaluation.

Additional copies of each version of the Framework can be ordered from KyCPE for $25 per copy.

### Framework Categories

Every version of the Framework is divided into eight parts: an Organizational Profile and seven categories.

The Organizational Profile asks general questions about the organization and sets the context for how the organization operates. The seven categories focus on the basic elements of organizational operations.

The seven Framework categories are:

* Leadership
* Strategy
* Customers
* Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management
* Workforce
* Operations
* Results

Emphasis is placed on systematic processes and performance results as demonstrated by responses to the Framework questions and results data furnished by applicants.

### Framework Items and Areas to Address

Framework categories are further broken down into a total of 17 items and 38 areas to address. These category components deepen the level of analysis with more in-depth questions based on different aspects of each item.

### KyCPE Award Levels

Organizations participating in the KyCPE Award Program may choose to apply at one of four award levels, listed below from lowest level of recognition (Interest) to highest (Excellence):

* Level 1 – Interest Recognition
* Level 2 – Commitment Award
* Level 3 – Achievement Award
* Level 4 – Excellence Award

As award levels increase, applicants must respond to increasingly detailed questions within the Framework. Here are the Framework requirements for each application level:

#### Level 1

Simplified Questionnaire and Self Evaluation

Checklist

#### Level 2

Organizational Profile – 5 pages max. Responses to the basic item requirements with reference to the appropriate [Baldrige Excellence Builder](https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/products-services/baldrige-excellence-builder) questions for guidance. Additional information on this area will be provided during training. 15 pages max.

#### Level 3

Organizational Profile – 5 pages max. Responses to the overall item requirements in the Framework. 35 pages max.

#### Level 4

Organizational Profile – 5 pages max.

Responses to the multiple item requirements in the Framework. 50 pages max.

### Award Recognition

All level 4 organizations that apply to the KyCPE Award Program will host a site visit. Site visits for level 2-3 applicants are optional at the organization’s request. All applicants including level 1 will receive an award recognizing its level of performance.

The level of recognition may be lower than the level for which the organization sends an application in for. For example, an organization that applies for a Level 3 award may receive Level 2 recognition if the Panel of Judges determines that the applicant does not meet the requirements for a Level 3 award.

Awards are presented at the Annual Awards Conference, traditionally held in June.

Award recipients are encouraged to publicize and advertise their awards. Level 4 Excellence Award winners are expected to share information about their successful performance and quality strategies with other organizations.

### Organization of KyCPE

KYCPE is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. The organization consists of an all-volunteer organization comprised of a Board of Directors, who are legally and financially responsible for KYCPE operations and an Operations Committee that manages KYCPE operations.

**Board of Examiners**

Examiner teams evaluate award applications using the *Baldrige Excellence Framework*. They participate in independent review and consensus evaluation, conduct site visits, and help prepare final feedback reports. There is an experienced “team lead” member that helps guide their team through the process.

Examiners must sign a confidentiality agreement and a “no conflict of interest agreement.

Members of the board must have time available from November to April to complete pre-work, attend the training course, review applications and prepare the final scorebook.

The Board of Examiners is composed of knowledgeable business, health care, education, and government workers or retirees. KyCPE selects board members each year.

Examiners also support KyCPE through outreach and educational activities. Through their membership in professional, trade, community

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| and state organizations, they help disseminate  |
| information about the benefits of the KyCPE |   |

program.

### Panel of Judges

The Panel of Judges, part of the Board of Examiners, reviews the work and recommendations of examiner teams, determines each applicant's level of recognition, and validates the integrity of the evaluation process.

Judges have served as examiners and team leaders for KyCPE, other state programs and/or the National Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. The panel’s expertise and experience represent all sectors of the economy.

### KyCPE Award Recipients

Applicant award recipients also play a vital role in the KyCPE organization. Many have generously helped other organizations pursue performance excellence by sharing information and encouraging performance improvement efforts. This often takes place during the Annual Awards Banquet. Excellence Award (level 4) winners are required to share their successful performance and quality strategies with other organizations at the June Awards Banquet. (Award recipients are *not* required to share any proprietary information, even if the information was part of an award application.)

### Members

Through dues and in-kind support, corporate and individual members provide a significant portion of KyCPE's funding.

KyCPE membership benefits include:

* Up-to-date information on performance improvement topics through the KYCPE member newsletter and member bulletins
* Opportunities for education and learning through discounted training and complimentary Banquet registrations (amount of discount depends on membership level).
* Discounted KyCPE Award Program application and site visit fees. (Level 1 applications are accepted year-round). *Members that want to participate in the awards part of the process must comply with KyCPE deadlines.*
* Access to custom training from experts who can speak on a variety of performance improvement topics (call for details)
* Demonstration of a commitment to the KyCPE mission
* Recognition in publications and links on the KYCPE website

For additional membership information, please visit our website at [http://www.KyCPE.org/.](http://www.kycpe.org/)

## KyCPE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

**Role of the Board of Examiners**

The Board of Examiners is composed of business, health care, education, and government experts, as well as representatives of various industries, professional and trade associations, government agencies, not-for-profit entities, and retired professionals. As a member of the Board of Examiners, the duties you perform provide the foundation for the KyCPE Award Program. **The importance of your contributions cannot be overstated.**

Accordingly, much is expected of you. As a member of the Board of Examiners, you agree:

* To serve for one award cycle: this lasts from completion of examiner training until the next year’s examiner training begins
* To complete a training program for first year examiners or upon returning examiner request
* To attend the full examiner training course (more time may be required for site visit training, where applicable)
* To understand and fulfill your responsibilities as an examiner as you serve on your assigned team
* To adhere to the Rules of Conduct and Code of Ethical Standards
* To meet all requirements for a fair and competent evaluation, including adherence to the *Baldrige Excellence Framework*, the scoring system, consensus, and, if required, site visit requirements
* To maintain thorough documentation and reasonable records, honor time commitments, and meet deadlines
* To serve as an ambassador of the KyCPE program.

### Selection of Examiners

Members of the Board of Examiners are selected based on individual merit and program needs. The program seeks to assemble a board of professionals capable of evaluating applicant organizations and prepared to serve as representatives of the KyCPE program. Criteria used in the selection of board members include breadth and diversity of experience; leadership, communication and interpersonal skills; knowledge of business; and knowledge of improvement strategies.

Board members are selected and appointed for one award cycle. Examiners should reapply in subsequent years if they wish to serve again.

We encourage examiners to return, as each year’s experience builds upon the previous year. In fact, everything seems to come together when an examiner has served three years. We often hear third-year examiners exclaim, “Wow, it

really clicked this time!”

### Examiner Training

Board of Examiner training is an intensive, high quality professional development opportunity. Examiners learn how to assess organizations based on the *Baldrige Excellence Framework,* and they are offered an opportunity to network with professionals from across the state, enhancing professional growth and forming relationships that can benefit you and/or your organization. It is also acknowledged as an excellent leadership training.

Examiners develop skills that can be applied at their own organizations, including analytical, consensus-building, team-building, interpersonal, written communication and interviewing skills and systems thinking.

In 2020 we are changing the new examiner (and others) training to be virtual. New examiners will have prework composed of prerecorded training modules and webinar. This will be followed by a virtual one day event where immediate student/trainer interaction can occur.

After this training, examination teams will be determined that include the appropriate mix of an experienced team lead, returning examiners and new examiners. Teams will then be presented with the Organizational Profile of their team’s applicant. Once No-conflict and NDAs are signed atwo day all examiner virtual training will occur. That training will include breakout sessions where each team will work together to hone their feedback comment writing and consensus skills and to better their knowledge of all things associated with the Baldrige Framework

If the examiner fails to complete all stages of the evaluation process, the examiner will be assessed a training fee of $300. These fees help cover KyCPE’s expenses for providing these two types of training.

### 2020-2021 Award Cycle

All Level Award Intents to Apply and OP Deadline . . . . . . Oct 30,2020

### Examiner Training

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| 11/1 – 11/30- New examiner prework using prerecorded training modules . 12/8New examiner one day live virtual training. After 12/9 – teams determinedAfter 12/9 – teams given Organizational Profile of their applicant. NDA and No-conflict forms must be signed. Teams should start review of OP and create the Key Factors List.12/11 NDA/No Conflict forms due to KyCPE12/14 Returning Examiners prework due-key factors for actual applicant assigned2021January 4, 2021 Applications received by KyCPEJanuary 5 2021 –Actual applications to be emailed to examiners. Independent review (IR) can begin for assigned Items, January 12- Completion of (IR) for assigned Items and submission to KyCPEJanuary 13-14 – All examiner virtual live training using full group instruction and team breakout room for the actual applications portions.1Q2021 – Actual Date TBD – Live virtual training regarding site visit training. At least one application this cycle is expected to require a virtual site visit to help verify Strengths and clarify any OFIs determined by review of the application. |

**Independent Review & Scoring Completion:** March 12 ,2021

**Consensus Process: complete by March** 31, 2021

Item Leads and backups are established and compilation of team observations and comments are sent to all from team lead

Team Leads and backups synthesize team observations and the team lead defines OFIs and Strengths including any double Strengths and OFIs for all teams

**For level 4 team** also define all questions that need to be asked at the site visit. Complete feedback ready comments for items that are reasonably certain that will not change at the site visit and prepare to present those and all questions at consensus.

**For level 2 teams** begin completion of

|  |
| --- |
| written feedback ready comments for all  |
| categories to present at Consensus. . . . . . Mar 12, 2021 |   |

**For All teams** - Consensus Meeting completed. . . Mar31, 2021

**After Consensus**

**Level 2 Teams** – item leads and backup work per team lead schedule to complete feedback ready comment editing per consensus meeting results.

**Level 4 Teams** – prepare for Site Visit. Plan sequence of ADLI and LeTCI questions at site visit.

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| **Final Scorebooks** **Level 2 Teams**-Last version of feedback  |
| report to KyCPE ERB …………………April 18, 2021 |   |

 **Level 4 Teams (if assigned)** Virtual

Site Visit Completed . . . . . . . . . . . . Apr 16, 2021

 Level 4 team feedback report to KyCPE ERB

May 2. 2021

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| All- Final Scorebooks-Site Visit team to Judges May 16, 20215/30 Judges review reports , provide inputs to the teams And award recommendation  |  |
| Last version of feedback report to KyCPE . . . |

June 14,2021

### Team Assignment, Duties of Examiners

The KyCPE office assigns an examiner team to read, evaluate, and score each application. The process KyCPE uses to assign examiner teams is designed to provide the fairest evaluation of each application.

Applicant organizations should receive significant value from applying to the KyCPE Award Program. Accordingly, examiner teams are selected to correspond with applicant organizations based on individual examiner knowledge and experience, consistent with conflict of interest requirements. KyCPE strives to spread the workload equitably among examiner teams.

### Examiner Team Leaders

Each team is assigned a team leader – an experienced examiner who is responsible for guiding the team throughout the evaluation process.

**Time Commitments**

It is critical that examiners adhere to agreed upon due dates and complete their evaluations on schedule. **Failure to meet due dates can significantly impede the KyCPE Award Program.**

**Independent Review:**Duties require a time commitment of approximately 15 to 40 hours per application depending on the application level and experience of the examiner. It is recommended that the examiner schedule their time over multiple days well in advance of the due date, in case any questions arise that need to be clarified by the Team Lead.

**Consensus:** The consensus process leading up to the consensus meeting requires a time commitment of approximately 8 hours. The consensus meeting itself requires a commitment of 4 to 8 hours.

**Site Visit (if assigned** For 2021, site visits will be virtual – no travel. However there is a time requirement to prepare for, conduct, review the results of the site visit and modify the feedback comments and final scorebook accordingly .

**Final Scorebook preparation:** Additional time is required to fine tune the content for the final scorebook (the main component of the applicant’s feedback report).

#### Duties of Judges

Judges review all Level 2, 3, and 4 applications, site visit findings (as appropriate), and final scorebooks to determine the level of recognition and to validate the integrity of the award program. The decisions of the Panel of Judges are final.

#### Editorial Review Board

The Editorial Review Board (ERB) is comprised of a specialized group of KyCPE examiners who review the feedback report after it has been turned in to KyCPE by the examiner team. The ERB works with the respective team leaders and Judges to provide a consistent Feedback Report. They check the report in a number of areas to ensure it is truly meaningful to the applicant. All changes are approved by the team leaders on behalf of the team.

### Service Recognition

After completing the examiner training course you will:

* Receive a lapel pin indicating your membership on the Board of Examiners
* Be provided with a personalized press release from KyCPE to submit to hometown newspapers, alumni and professional association newsletters and similar publications.
* In addition, all examiners are invited to attend the Annual Awards Banquet at a reduced fee. Framed certificates will be awarded and photos taken.

### The Examiner’s Role as Ambassador of the Program-

**(A Voluntary Effort that is not required)**

In addition to your responsibilities reviewing applications, examiners can help further KyCPE’s vision and mission by serving as representatives of the program. As ambassadors, examiners participate on panels, give presentations, write articles, distribute program materials and encourage others to submit applications for the award program and Board of Examiners. Many of these activities involve professional and trade associates to which examiners already belong. Please contact KYCPE for materials and appropriate guidelines for conducting this effort in the event you are interested in this activity.

####  Rules of Conduct

The following Rules of Conduct are established to maintain the confidentiality of KyCPE Award Program application, information, including the identity of applicants. In addition, these rules preserve fairness in the examination process. The rules pertain to the entire Board of Examiners, including judges, team leaders, coached, and examiners as well as ERB members.

Examiners must agree to a standard code of conduct and non-disclosure, and

* Will conduct themselves professionally, guided by truth, accuracy, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all their interactions
* Will maintain and safeguard fairness in the examination process and the confidentiality of all Award application information, including the identity of applicants
* Will treat as confidential all information about the applicant and the applicant’s operation gained through the evaluation process
* Will encourage and maintain a professional working environment that promotes respect for the Award applicants, their employees and all members of the Examiner team.
* Will respect the climate, culture, and values of the organization being evaluated
* Will not intentionally communicate false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of the Award process or decisions therein.
* Will not at any time (during or after the evaluation cycle) independently give feedback to applicants regarding scoring or overall performance.
* For a period of three years after the evaluation, will not approach an organization that they have evaluated for their personal gain, including the establishment of an employment or consulting relationship
* If approached by an organization they have evaluated, will not accept employment or a consulting arrangement from that organization for a period of three years after the evaluation

#### Code of Ethical Standards Declaration of Principles

Members of the Kentucky Center for Performance Excellence Board of Examiners pledge to uphold their professional principles in the fulfillment of their responsibilities.

In promoting high standards of public service and ethical conduct, Examiners:

* Will avoid representing conflicting or competing interests, or placing themselves in such a position where their interest may be in conflict – or appear to be in conflict-with the purposes and administrations of the KYCPE Award Program
* Will not review an organization with which they or their family members have an employment relationship
* Will not serve as Examiners of a primary competitor or customer or supplier of any organization (or submit of an organization) that employs them, that they have a financial interest in, or with which they anticipate a consulting arrangement
* Will not review an organization that represents more than 5% of their investments

#### Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

Those selected to serve on the Board of Examiners must sign and agree to adhere to KyCPE’s Conflict of Interest and Non-Disclosure Agreement immediately upon receiving their application assignment(s) and organizational profile. Conflict of Interest takes into account employers, significant ownership, client relationships and affiliations that may present or seem to present a conflict of interest to the examiner’s ability to impartially fulfill his/her KyCPE duties. Such information will be kept confidential. A Conflict of Interest/Non-Disclosure Agreement must be completed for each application assigned.

**Computer Practices and Confidentiality Considerations Computer Use**

When using personal computers (including laptops), examiners should use appropriate precautions and safeguards regarding hardware, confidential information and viruses.

***Due to confidentiality considerations, an examiner is not permitted to have someone else transcribe written documents relating to the KYCPE Award application evaluation.***

####  Level 1 Scorebook

The Level 1 Process is now done using only experienced team leads per the process outlined in the Level 1 examination workbook.

#### Level 2, 3, and 4 Scorebooks: Quiet Excellence Workbook

Examiners reviewing Level 2, 3, and 4

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| applications will use the Quiet Excellence Excel |
| Workbooks to complete independent reviews.  |

Examiners will use Microsoft Word scorebooks and formatting instructions provided by the team lead to record proposed consensus comments and complete the final scorebooks.

***Independent Review*** Each examiner will complete his/her independent assessment and notify his/her team leader upon completion. Use the **Excel QE workbook** that includes the compilation tab. This compilation tab helps save time of the team lead, for organizing content from all team members, to enable consensus.

***Consensus*** The team will collectively complete one consensus scorebook and the team leaders will notify the KyCPE office upon its completion.

As explained later in this document team leaders will assign examiners to be a lead for preparing specific categories or items for consensus. To enable all pieces of consensus to be easily assembled into a final scorebook all team members should use the same Blank Team Feedback Comments **MS Word** formatting when documenting their consensus ready feedback comments. This common format will enable the team lead to easily compile all consensus ready comments without having to convert all formats to the required final report format.

***Site Visit (if assigned)***

Each Examiner will use site visit issue worksheets to track how comments from the consensus scorebook were clarified or verified. These worksheets are turned in to the team leader after the site visit and are included in the materials submitted to the Panel of Judges and ERB.

***Final Scorebook Preparation***

Upon completion of consensus or site visit (if assigned) wrap up meeting, the team will complete the final scorebook. The team leader may need help from some team members to finalize the scorebook in a timely manner after consensus. The team leader will send the completed scorebook to the KyCPE office upon completion.

***Team hour Tracking***

Each team member will be asked to provide an estimate of hours spent on independent review, pre-consensus, consensus and post-consensus work. This is used by KyCPE for planning purposes.

**Security and Confidentiality Requirements**

Confidentiality of the award program requires that software-generated scorebooks, reports, etc. be treated with the same level of security as paper copies of Award application materials.

Written application materials should be stored in a secure location, such as a locked file or file cabinet.

With the exception of the final feedback report, the applicant will only be referred to as “the applicant” (not the applicants actual name) in all feedback comments and scorebooks.

When the entire process is complete and the final feedback report has been delivered to the applicant, KyCPE will send a message to examiners to destroy or delete all files and application related materials, including hard copy and soft copy.

Written application material should be stored in a secure location, such as a locked file or file cabinet. With the exception of the final feedback report, applicants are referred to only by the term “applicant”, organizations or other team agreed upon consistent nomenclature. (Not the applicant’s actual name).

When the review process is complete and the feedback report has been delivered to the applicant, KyCPE will send a message to examiners asking them to destroy or delete all application-related materials, including papers, electronic documents, and backup files.

## Evaluation Process Map

A team selected from the Board of Examiners evaluates each written application. Every applicant organization receives a feedback report detailing its strengths and opportunities for improvements (OFIs).

### Key Process Steps

|  |
| --- |
| Receive Intent to Apply Receive Application Application Level Independent Review Consensus Discussion Site Visit Interviews (and Consultation) Level 1 Feedback Preparation Independent Review 1)Stage ( Consensus 2)Stage ( Site Visit (if required) Stage 3)( Final Scorebook Preparation 4))Stage ( ERB review. Judges Review and Determine Award Level Stage (5) Level 1 Level 2\*, 3, or 4 Feedback to Applicant  |

As illustrated in the chart below, there can be five steps in the evaluation process for Level 2, 3, and 4 applicants: (1) independent review; (2) consensus; (3) site visit (required for Level 4, optional for Levels 2 and 3); (4) final scorebook preparation; (5) judges’ and ERB review and determination of award level.

## EVALUATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

The next few sections provide an overview of the evaluation process for both Level 1 and Level 2, 3 and 4 applicants, respectively.

### Level 1

#### *Independent Review*

A Level 1 application consists of a simplified questionnaire and a self-evaluation checklist... Each team member independently reviews the questionnaire, noting information that is related to each Framework category. Typically, experienced examiners are assigned to level 1 applications.

### *Consensus and Site Visit*

A Level 1 consensus meeting may take place by telephone or in person just prior to the site visit. The site visit has a two-fold purpose: in addition to learning more about the applicant, examiners educate the applicant about the Framework, performance excellence, quality tools and KyCPE.

### *Feedback Report*

The Level 1 Feedback Report contains comments on the applicant’s strengths and opportunities for improvement (known as “OFIs”) in the seven categories of the Framework. In addition, examiners on Level 1 teams are asked to provide observations and recommendations related for each category.

**Level 2\* (note that this is a modification to the chart on page 12)**

Two senior KyCPE representatives would visit the applicant before they start their application writing. These individuals will not be part of the applicant’s evaluation team. These examiners will not be referred to as examiners during any of the visits or communications.

-These representatives will provide a very  brief level 2 Criteria overview at the beginning on the first visit,
-Over two 6 hour visits, these two representatives will  assist the applicant get started with writing the application by filing in responses to some questions in the level 2 matrix and then provide this information  to the applicant. These representatives would be sensitive to what Criteria are of particular interest to a given applicant.

Information provided by representatives would consist of explanations of what the various Criteria questions mean. Inputs from the applicant would be entered into the form in the applicant’s own words without any feedback or consulting being provided other than reexplaining what the question meant, if needed. The form would be provided to the applicant.

The applicant would later add their responses to all level 2 questions and then cut and paste these responses into the standard two column Baldrige text format with a maximum of 15 pages. This latter document would be provided to KYCPE as the application.

**Levels 2, 3 and 4**

### *Independent Review (Stage 1)*

Independent review is the first stage of the application evaluation process for Level 2, 3 and 4 applicants. During this stage, examiners review an assigned application, independent of their examiner team members. Each examiner reads the application and compares the applicant’s responses to the Framework requirements.

During independent review, the application forms and written application are the only sources of applicant information that examiners are permitted to use.

Strengths and gaps are noted and recorded using the **Quiet Excellence workbook**. Throughout this process, examiners will note potential strengths, OFIs, and site visit issues (where applicable). Then, using the scoring guidelines, examiners will score the applicant's response against the Framework. The outcome of the independent review provides a basis for the team’s consensus meeting. The team leader will provide information relative to the sharing of strengths, OFIs and scores.

***Independent reviews will be shared among team members only after every team member’s independent review has been completed, and received by the Team Leader.***

### Consensus (Stage 2)

The purpose of consensus is to clarify and resolve differences in individual examiners’ observations and scoring during their independent reviews (Stage 1). During this stage, the team reaches consensus on scorebook strength and OFI feedback comments, key factors, site visit issues (where applicable) and numerical scores, based upon the contributions of all team members.

After independent review the team leader will assign each team member the responsibility of preparing one or more items for the consensus meeting. As you prepare for consensus, you will write the complete feedback comments which will eventually become key components of your team’s final scorebook.

### Site Visit – if required (Stage 3)

An applicant applying for Level 4 is required to host a 3 day3-day site visit. Those applicants applying for Level 2 or 3 may elect to purchase a visit (1 to 3 days), although it is not required.

If you are assigned to a team that is evaluating an applicant hosting a site visit, your team will receive site visit training.

### *Final Scorebook Preparation (Stage 4)*

For those applicants who do not host a site visit, the feedback report generated through the consensus meeting is the input for the team for final editing of the Final Scorebook. For those applicants who did host a site visit, the team will prepare a final scorebook after the site visit. ***Remember, as an examiner you will know the applicant best.*** ***Although the final scorebook will be reviewed in the KyCPE office, the content of the final scorebook is the responsibility of your team.***

Each KyCPE Award Program applicant receives a written feedback report. This report is one of the most important components of the evaluation process because it provides the applicant a pathway for continuous improvement.

Applicants use the feedback report to learn about their strengths and OFIs, relative to the requirements of the Framework. Comments provided in the scorebooks are vital to producing the feedback report to the ultimate customer – the applicant. As a result, every examiner is critical in providing effective feedback.

Effective feedback requires:

* A thorough evaluation of the application relative to the Baldrige Excellence Framework
* Noting key Strengths and OFIs for each item in the Framework criteria
* Effective communication of those Strengths and OFIs to the applicant through feedback comments in the final feedback report

#### Feedback Report Format

The supplementary material and components of the final scorebook that are the basis for the applicant’s feedback report include:

***Cover Letter*** This letter congratulates the applicant for participating in the program. It provides details about the evaluation process. ***Preparing to Read Your Feedback Report***

This one-page instruction sheet offers tips on how best to review the information contained in the feedback report and how to apply the information to continuous improvement processes within the organization.

***Award Level and Scoring Band information*** This section tells the applicant which scoring bands it achieved during consensus and which bands it achieved after the site visit was complete. It also describes the KYCPE Award level the applicant earned and provides characteristics of that level.

***Key Themes*** Prepared by the team leader or assigned team member, this section is two to three pages in length and summarizes the key points of the evaluation of the applicant that go across multiple categories. It is an assessment of the most important strengths, significant OFIs and key results.

***Item Evaluation*** Prepared by the item/category leaders, this section contains comments on each item of the Framework. Comments cite the applicant’s specific strengths and OFIs relative to the Framework requirements. The team’s scoring range for each item is included.

***Appendix*** This section describes various aspects of the KYCPE program including information about award levels, scoring and the evaluation process.

### Judges Review and Determine Award Level (Stage 5)

**Panel of Judges & Judging Procedure**

Judges come to the “Judgment Day” meeting having reviewed the scorebooks of all Level 2, 3, and 4 applicants. For those applicants hosting a site visit, the judges will have also reviewed site visit findings.

All conflicts are reviewed and discussed so that judges are aware of the limitations on information that will be used to determine Award levels. Judges are denied information on applicants with whom a conflict exists or may appear to exist. All judges that have declared a conflict with an applicant will leave the room during any discussion related to the applicant.

One lead judge and one backup judge are assigned to each Level 2 and Level 3 applicant. Each Level 4 applicant is assigned two lead judges. The lead judge has reviewed the application, and the findings of the final scorebook. If the applicant received a site visit, the judge reviews the site visit issue worksheets, their resolution, and the findings of the final scorebook. The other non-conflicted judges have reviewed the applicant’s organizational profile and the final key themes.

Applications in each of the three Award levels are discussed separately.

The lead judges facilitate discussion of each assigned application. If necessary, questions are developed and a conference call with the team leader is conducted. Discussion of the application continues until all participating judges conclude that the review has been adequate.

The judges reach consensus on the level of recognition.

After discussion of all applicants is complete, judges review the applications at each Award level to verify the integrity of the process.

***Decisions of the Judges are final.***

### Basic Judging Principles

* Achieve maximum benefits of discussion and consensus.
* Strive for the maximum number of judges participating in as many applicant decisions as is consistent with conflict of interest rules.
* Eliminate conflict of interest and appearance of conflict of interest.
* A judge will vote on an applicant only if he or she has been present during the discussion of the applicant.
* All necessary steps will be taken to preserve applicant confidentiality.
* At all times judges and the KYCPE Lead Judge will strive to maintain a positive learning environment.

### Award Presentation

Applicants’ awards are presented at the Annual Best Practices Banquet & Awards Celebration. The 2021 Annual Awards celebration event may be held or it may be virtual. The date is TBD. As a member of the 2021 Board of Examiners, you will be invited to attend.

To preserve the confidentiality of our applicants, we ask that examiners do not speak with their assigned applicant at the banquet unless the applicant initiates the conversation.