

Improving Public Organisations through Self-Assessment



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CAF External Feedback

January 2013



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Foreword



At the end of the 1990s, quality management became an important issue for the public sector in the European Union. In order to coordinate their efforts and to start up a common European learning process, the EU

Ministers responsible for public administration invited their Directors-General (DG) to promote exchanges and cooperation between the EU Member States and to develop common instruments in the field of quality management. It was clear that there was a great need for European initiatives of this kind.

A first product of the cooperation among EU national experts was presented: the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), a real common European quality management instrument for the public sector, developed by the public sector.

The CAF is a total quality management tool developed by the public sector for the public sector, inspired by the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM®). It is based on the premise that excellent results in organisational performance, citizens/customers, people and society are achieved through leadership driving strategy and planning, people, partnerships, resources and processes. It looks at the organisation from different angles at the same time: the holistic approach to organisation performance analysis.

Public organisations invested a lot of efforts in using the CAF and many of them wanted to know if they were doing well, and wanted to learn about their CAF practice. They started to look for feedback, for recognition. Was their process of self-assessment done well? Did their improvement plan effectively reflect the conclusions of the self-assessment and had they taken the first steps on their journey for total quality management? How could they show this internally and externally?

Based upon their demand, reflection began on an external feedback scheme for CAF Users. As for the CAF itself, this was done in the spirit of European collaboration and developed in consensus between the different Member States. The core of the CAF External feedback Procedure is the feedback given by

peers or experts on three main issues (later called the 'pillars'): the self-assessment process; the improvement planning; and the start of the journey amongst the 8 principles of excellence, the guiding principles towards an excellent organisation. This feedback constitutes the real added value of the CAF External Feedback Procedure. The peers and experts – called External Feedback Actors – will enter into dialogue with the different stakeholders of the organisation regarding the implementation of CAF give comments and formulate advice for the future. They will motivate the CAF Users to continue their efforts to further develop quality in all its aspects. To conclude their remarks, they will at the end of the procedure decide if the organisation has used CAF in an effective way and whether it deserves the Effective CAF User Label for the coming two years.

Many actual and potential CAF users have already shown their interest in the CAF External Feedback and the 'CAF Label'. Both these new CAF related instruments constitute an extra stimulus to start using the CAF or to continue its use as part of the strategy for continuous improvement. A new impetus for the use of CAF is given and a growing number of CAF Users is expected for the future. Each Member State will have the responsibility to put the new system into practice, taking into account its own specificities. Yet, as they will follow common European guidelines, the Effective CAF User Label will have a clear European dimension. It creates an additional way to bring European CAF Users together, to exchange their practices and to raise the level of quality development once again.

The new CAF External Feedback Procedure was elaborated based upon the results of a number of pilot processes and in strong collaboration between the CAF National Correspondents Network within IPSG. Special thanks go in particular to the project group working on the procedure, composed of Belgium (Jean-Marc Dochot), Denmark (Mads Biering Sorensen & Hanne Dorthe Sorensen), Italy (Sabina Bellotti, Massimo Tronci & Italo Benedini), Slovenia (Gordana Zurga) and the European Institute of Public Administration – EIPA (Patrick Staes, Nick Thijs & Ann Stoffels), and supported by EFQM (Samuli Pruikkonen, Celal Seckin, Carla Guerra). They all worked together in the spirit of the common European interest and the conviction that their work will constitute a next step in the further development of a qualitative public sector in Europe.

Executive Summary



The CAF External Feedback Procedure – which provides external feedback on the assessment that has taken place with CAF – aims to further support CAF users in their journey towards quality.

1. The CAF External Feedback Procedure

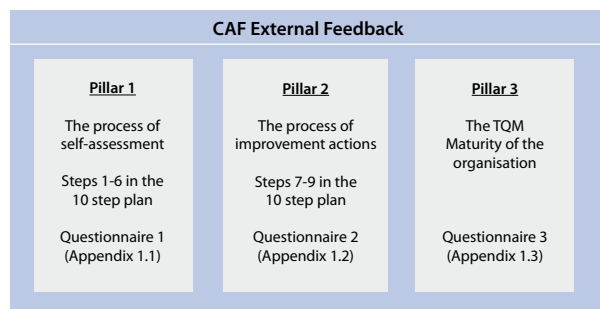
To enable public sector organisations applying CAF to see the results of their efforts and to obtain feedback, the CAF External Feedback Procedure provides external feedback on the introduction of total quality management with CAF. This feedback relates not only to the self assessment process, but also to the way forward chosen by organisations in order to attain excellence in the long run, and is based upon the principles of excellence.

The objectives of the CAF External Feedback Procedure

The CAF External Feedback aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Support the quality of the CAF implementation and its impact on the organisation.
2. Find out if the organisation is installing TQM values as the result of the CAF application.
3. Support and renew enthusiasm in the organisation for continuous improvement.
4. Promote peer review and bench learning.
5. Reward organisations that have started the journey towards continuous improvement to achieve excellence in an effective way, without judging their obtained level of excellence.
6. Facilitate the participation of CAF users in the EFQM® Levels of Excellence.

To that end, the CAF External Feedback Procedure is built upon three pillars.



1

Pillar 1: The process of self-assessment

The quality of the self-assessment serves as a basis for the success of future improvements. In the first pillar of the CAF External Feedback, the quality of the self assessment process is central. The CAF External Feedback Actors will look at the ability of the organisation to make an effective and well-planned self-assessment and will not be looking at the validation of the scores given in the CAF self assessment.

2

Pillar 2: The process of improvement actions

The next important element in an effective CAF implementation is acting upon the results from the self assessment. Suggestions for improvement need to be prioritised and translated into an improvement plan that will be carried out within a maximum timeframe of two years. In this second pillar of the CAF External Feedback Procedure, the Actors will look into the planning procedures adopted and the process followed for the implementation but they will not assess the results of the improvement actions.

3

Pillar 3: The TQM maturity of the organisation (the broader scope of excellence)

One of the aims of the CAF model is to guide public sector organisations closer towards the important values of Total Quality Management. By applying the CAF model, these values should – over time – become part of the culture of the organisation. The questionnaire for TQM Assessment Maturity is therefore based on the eight fundamental Principles of Excellence. The evaluation concerns the maturity level achieved by the organisation as a result of the self-assessment and the improvement process.

2. The functioning of the CAF External Feedback Procedure

2.1 Implementation of CAF External Feedback of national level

The CAF 'National Organiser' is appointed at national level to be in charge of the implementation of the CAF External Feedback in the country. The National Organiser selects a core group of CAF External Feedback Actors (the evaluators). The underlying principle of the CAF External Feedback is that organisations can make use of it at minimum costs.

General common guidelines for the CAF External Feedback are described in this brochure. By following these guidelines, Member States will be able to guarantee that the CAF External Feedback processes are organised in a qualitative way and that – as a consequence – the 'Effective CAF User' label enjoys a high standard across the European Union.

2.2. The role of the European CAF Resource Centre

Besides managing the CAF database, the European CAF Resource Centre in EIPA Maastricht supports the Member States in the implementation of the CAF External Feedback Procedure through a number of initiatives: promoting the CAF External Feedback at European level, introducing the National CAF Correspondents to this procedure, offering a common European training scheme for CAF External Feedback Actors, coordinating support for Member States that do not have a National Organiser and organising the CAF External Feedback Procedure for non EU members and European institutions.

2.3 Application by CAF users

Each public organisation using CAF can apply for the CAF External Feedback under the following two conditions:

1. The application should be made between 6 and 12 months after the CAF self-assessment has taken place and the self-assessment report has been concluded and delivered.
2. The organisation registers, or is registered, as a CAF user in the online European Database of CAF users, hosted by EIPA.

The applicant organisation will then go through the different phases of the CAF External Feedback Procedure:

Phase 1: the application

Phase 2: the process of providing feedback

Phase 3: the final decision and awarding of the Effective CAF User label

3. Roles, tasks and profile of the CAF External Feedback Actors

The CAF External Feedback Actors play a crucial role in the CAF External Feedback Procedure. The main tasks of the CAF External Feedback Actors are to:

1. analyse the implementation of CAF through a process of self-assessment and improvement actions and analyse whether the organisation is implementing TQM values;
2. provide feedback and suggestions on strengths and areas of improvement regarding the process of CAF implementation;
3. support and renew enthusiasm in the organisation to work with holistic quality development and self assessment with the CAF Model.

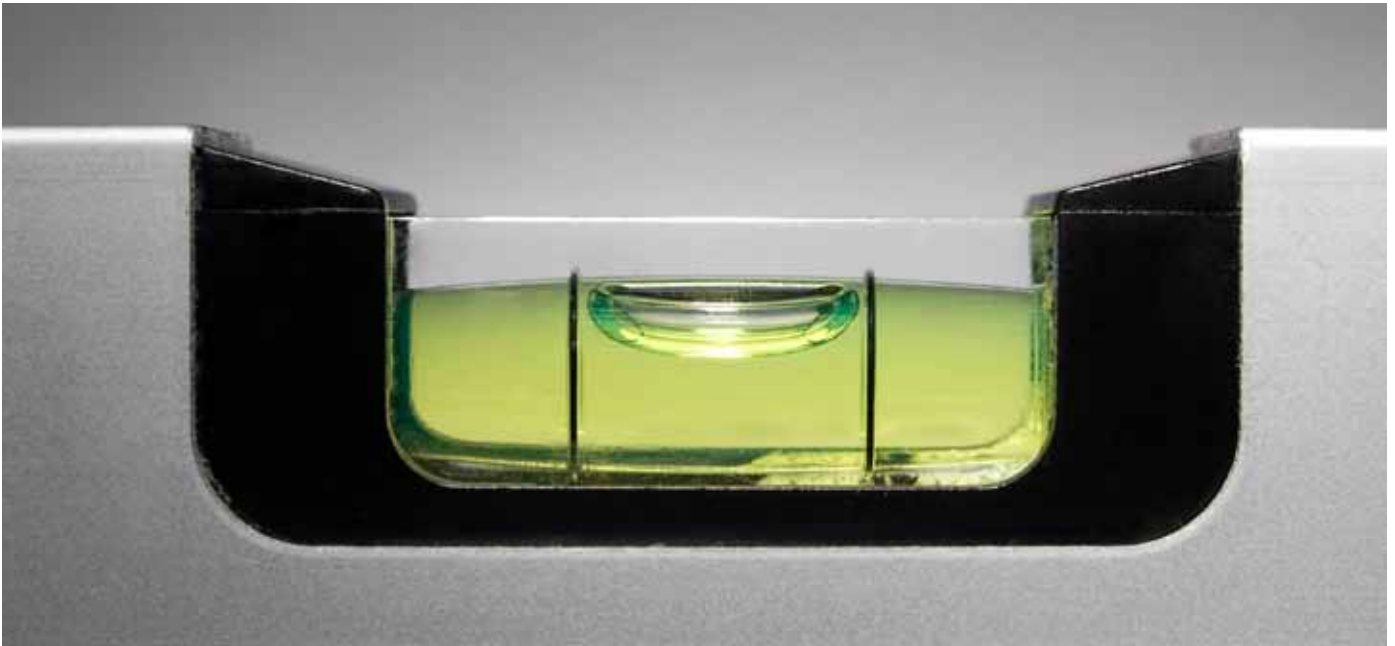
A CAF External Feedback Actor requires a balance of personal and professional skills, coupled with a commitment to timely and appropriate conduct. The CAF External Feedback Actor must have participated in the European or national training course to become a CAF External Feedback Actor.

Conclusion

The CAF External Feedback Procedure adds value to the use of the CAF and to its users. Public sector organisations will want to see the results of all their efforts and they require feedback about their efforts. This CAF External Feedback by peers and experts will help organisations take the next steps on their quality management journey towards making their efforts visible both internally and externally.

PART 1:

The CAF External Feedback



1. Effective use of the CAF model

The use of the CAF model provides an organisation with a powerful framework to initiate a process of continuous improvement. The CAF provides:

- an assessment based on evidence, against a set of criteria which has become widely accepted across the public sector in Europe;
- opportunities to identify progress and outstanding levels of achievement;
- a means to achieve consistency of direction and consensus on what needs to be done to improve an organisation;
- a link between the different results to be achieved and supportive practices or enablers;
- a means to create enthusiasm among employees by involving them in the improvement process;
- opportunities to promote and share good practice within different areas of an organisation and with other organisations;
- a means to integrate various quality initiatives into normal business operations;
- a means of measuring progress over time through periodic self-assessment.

The CAF External Feedback has been created to further support organisations in using the CAF

most effectively in their future quality management journey and to exploit to the maximum the features as described above. The three main reasons why it is important to use the CAF effectively and to receive feedback on this are the following:

Reason 1: Success of the CAF depends on the way in which it is applied

As described in the CAF brochure, the guidelines for implementing the CAF in an organisation are not strict rules and regulations to be followed, but are to be regarded as recommended steps based on experience and successful applications during 10 years of working with the CAF. A successful implementation of the CAF strongly depends on the way in which the CAF model is used in an organisation. It can be useful for organisations receiving feedback on its usage to further improve their effectiveness in the future.

Reason 2: Working with CAF also means launching improvement actions

Applying the CAF model in an effective way not only means carrying out a self-assessment, but also involves creating an improvement plan and carrying out the actions in this plan. Receiving feedback on this

plan and how it has been implemented can be one important way in which the CAF External Feedback Procedure can provide added value. Another important reason is the motivational aspect. As experience in many projects has shown, motivation and dynamics are usually quite high in organisations when starting the improvement plan. The challenge, however, is to continue these efforts. The external feedback can therefore help organisations keep up the momentum and avoid losing their motivation or dynamics.

Reason 3: Excellence is the beginning and the end of the CAF

The eight principles of excellence form the basis of the CAF model (as described in the previous part). Organisations that are starting to implement the CAF have the ambition to grow towards excellence in their performance and have introduced this culture of excellence in the organisation. Effective use of the CAF should, in time, lead to the further development of this type of culture and thinking within the organisation. Receiving feedback on this can help organisations develop this culture in future.

These three reasons form the drivers behind the CAF External Feedback Procedure.

The background and main features of the CAF External Feedback Procedure, its aims, objectives and underlying principles, will be described in this brochure.

2. The demand for external feedback

Public Sector organisations, which implement the CAF quality management system, will want to see the results of all their efforts and look for external feedback. This external feedback by peers and experts in TQM would provide such organisations with a clearer insight into what had been done, as well as opening up new perspectives for work on quality in the future. Furthermore, to make their successful efforts visible internally and externally, a Label of 'Effective CAF User' will be awarded to those organisations who use the CAF effectively.

3. The objectives of the CAF External Feedback

The CAF External Feedback has several important objectives:

- **Support the quality of the CAF implementation and its impact on the organisation.**

The CAF model was launched as an instrument for self-assessment and organisational development. The CAF External Feedback provides organisations with the possibility to receive feedback on their CAF application and the quality journey launched in the organisation.

- **Find out if the organisation is installing TQM values as the result of the CAF application.**

The CAF is based on a number of TQM values. Application of the CAF model should enable these values to become part of the organisation's culture. Working with the CAF forces organisations to focus on certain important elements of TQM and makes them aware of the necessity to incorporate these values into the day to day running of the organisation.

- **Support and renew enthusiasm in the organisation for continuous improvement.**

One important element in a good CAF self-assessment is the creation and implementation of an improvement plan. It is difficult for organisations to maintain the pace of change over a longer period of time. Many organisations pay less attention and lose track after a while. To keep their attention focused on improvements, the organisation receives external feedback at a perfect time to see if the organisation is still working on its improvements as planned.

- **Promote peer review and bench learning.**

One of the primary aims of the CAF is to help organisations learn from one another. The CAF External Feedback provides a new opportunity to learn from other organisations and to receive useful feedback from experienced users, colleagues and peers who have been through the same process and faced the same difficulties.

- **Reward organisations that have started the journey towards continuous improvement to achieve excellence in an effective way, without judging their obtained level of excellence.**

The CAF provides many organisations with a starting point for working on quality in a structured manner. The CAF External Feedback aims at stimulating organisations who have taken

this path towards quality. The procedure recognises the attempts the organisation makes, the direction it has chosen and the way in which this is undertaken.

- **Facilitate the participation of CAF users in the EFQM® Levels of Excellence**, thus providing a bridge to the Committed to Excellence programme, since organisations that have been awarded the ECU label can demonstrate that they have carried out a reliable self-assessment and that they possess an effective action plan. (The feedback report which confirms the effective use of CAF will mention the possibility of applying for EFQM® Levels of Excellence, including R4E).

4. The principles of the CAF External Feedback Procedure

The six general principles underpinning the CAF External Feedback Procedure are:

1. The CAF External Feedback Procedure is a common European framework, to be implemented according to the national contexts on a voluntary basis.
2. The CAF External Feedback Procedure promotes feedback of the implementation of CAF and its effects on the organisation.

3. This feedback is given by peers and/or external experts.
4. The CAF External Feedback Procedure leads to the label of Effective CAF User which will be valid for two years.
5. The CAF External Feedback Procedure is built upon three pillars:
 - the process of self-assessment
 - the process of improvement actions
 - the TQM maturity of the organisation (the broader scope of excellence)
6. The decision and responsibility for implementing the CAF External Feedback Procedure at a national level belongs to each Member State. The national CAF correspondents are invited to cooperate with the European CAF Resource Centre at EIPA and the national EFQM contacts if needed.

5. The three pillars of the CAF External Feedback: ambitions and philosophy

The CAF External Feedback is built upon three pillars. These pillars are elaborated in detail in the next part of this brochure and also in the various questionnaires and scoring guides contained in the appendix.

The main features of the pillars are described below.

CAF External Feedback

Pillar 1

The process of self-assessment

Steps 1-6 in the 10 step plan

Questionnaire 1
(Appendix 1.1)

Pillar 2

The process of improvement actions

Steps 7-9 in the 10 step plan

Questionnaire 2
(Appendix 1.2)

Pillar 3

The TQM Maturity of the organisation

Questionnaire 3
(Appendix 1.3)

1

Pillar 1: The process of self-assessment

The quality of the self-assessment serves as a basis for the success of future improvements. In the first pillar of the CAF External Feedback, the quality of the self-assessment process is central. In order to obtain an in-depth look at the quality of the process, steps 1-6 of the 10-step process (as described in the CAF 2013 guidelines) will be analysed. A questionnaire has been developed for the assessment of these different steps. The questionnaire covers the six steps and is not meant for validating the scores given in the CAF self-assessment.

Steps in Pillar 1

Step 1:	Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).
Step 2:	Communicate the self-assessment project.
Step 3:	Create a self-assessment group or groups.
Step 4:	Organise training.
Step 5:	Perform the self-assessment.
Step 6:	Prepare a report describing the results of self-assessment.

All these steps are translated into specific actions. Here we present the different actions defined for step 1 of the self-assessment process. For a detailed description of all the steps, see **Appendix 1.1 The self-assessment process questionnaire**.

Self-assessment process Pillar 1**Step 1:****Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).**

1.1	Assure the commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process.
1.2	Assure a clear management decision regarding completion of the SA in consultation with the organisation, the scope of the SA (SA covers the whole organisation or only parts/units/departments...) and the overall objective of the SA.
1.3	Define the framework for SA process and the following actions, and plan the SA activities.
1.4	Appoint an SA process leader with a high level of knowledge of the organisation or form an SA Committee headed by the SA process leader.
1.5	Define the scoring panel to be used.
1.6	Allocate resources for SA and define how to prioritise the distribution of resources.

Scoring of the organisation is based on clear and simple evaluation scales.

The scheme recognises the ability to make an effective and well-planned self-assessment that increases the organisation's understanding of the fundamental principles required to become excellent. The evaluation scale has five levels:

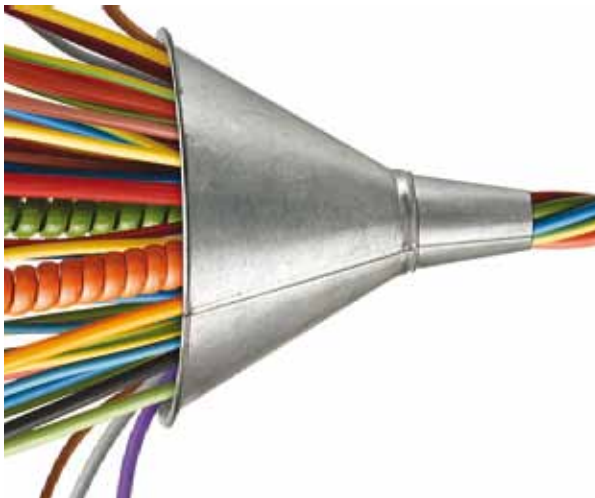
1	The activities have been carried out in a very limited way.
2	The activities have been carried out in a limited way.
3	The activities have been carried out in an acceptable way.
4	The activities have been carried out in a satisfying (satisfactory) way.
5	The activities have been carried out in an outstanding way.

This evaluation scale has been detailed for each action in phrases, defining the interpretation of the real situation of the organisation with regard to the specific theme.

For a further explanation of the scoring and its use, please refer to the Scoring Guide (Appendix 2, sections 2.1 and 3.1).

Step 1: Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).**Action 1.1 Assure commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process.**

1	2	3	4	5
There is no evidence of commitment and ownership of the management.	There is some evidence of commitment of the management for launching the process, but limited to some of the managers involved.	There is evidence of commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process.	There is clear evidence of commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process, acting as guide and sponsor, and communicating the targets and advantages.	There is strong evidence of commitment and ownership of all the management involved for launching the process, acting as guide and sponsor, communicating the objectives and advantages and participating in the project definition.



2

Pillar 2: The process of improvement actions

A self-assessment and a good diagnosis based on the CAF is one thing, but another important element of an effective CAF implementation relates to doing something with the results of the self-assessment. Conclusions have to be prioritised and translated into an improvement plan covering a (limited) list of well-chosen actions to be carried out in a maximum timeframe of two years. This second pillar of the CAF External Feedback procedure focuses on this phase of the CAF implementation and covers steps 7-9 of the 10-step process mentioned in the CAF 2013 guidelines. The steps all provide a detailed insight into the improvement plan, the quality of this plan, and how it is created, communicated and monitored.

The CAF External Feedback covers the planning and the process of improvement and is not meant for assessing the results of the improvement actions.

Steps in Pillar 2

Step 7:	Draft an improvement plan, based on the accepted self-assessment report.
Step 8:	Communicate the improvement plan.
Step 9:	Implement the improvement plan.

As in Pillar 1, all these steps are translated into specific actions and are evaluated against the same five point evaluation scale presented above. For a detailed presentation of the different actions in all the steps of Pillar 2, see **Appendix 1.2 The improvement plan questionnaire** and the Scoring Guide (Appendix 2, sections 2.1 and 3.1) for an in-depth explanation of the scoring on this pillar.

3

Pillar 3: The TQM maturity of the organisation (the broader scope of excellence)

The third pillar of the CAF External Feedback focuses on the eight Principles of Excellence and a shift in focus towards these principles after applying the CAF model.

The questionnaire for TQM Assessment Maturity is based on these eight Principles of Excellence. All eight principles must be checked by the organisation as a first step in order to gain an understanding of the TQM maturity within the organisation.

During the site visit, two Principles - as chosen by the applicant - will be assessed in depth (one of which must either be Results orientation or Customer focus).

The evaluation team assesses the maturity level achieved by the organisation as a result of the self-assessment and action plan. Evaluation of the TQM Maturity determines the extent to which the organisation has succeeded in implementing holistic quality development values through the self-assessment and improvement process. The aim is therefore not to assess the real results of the improvement activities and the quality of these, but to assess whether the self-assessment has stimulated the introduction and development of a culture of excellence within the organisation.

The evaluation scale has four levels:

0	= Initiation level has not been achieved
I	= Initiation level
R	= Realisation level
M	= Maturity level

These different maturity levels are illustrated with concrete statements for all eight principles. Here we present criteria 3 on 'Leadership and constancy of purpose' as an example. For a full description of all the principles see **Appendix 1.3 The TQM Maturity questionnaire** and the Scoring Guide (Appendix 2, parts 2.2 and 3.2).



Principle of excellence	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
3. Leadership and constancy of purpose				
Definition	Initiation level has not been achieved.	Leaders establish a clear mission statement.	Leaders establish vision and values. They drive and inspire people towards excellence.	Leaders demonstrate the capability to keep a constancy of purpose in a changing environment.
Examples		Leaders provide the organisation with a well-defined mission according to legislation and regulation requirements, whilst taking into account the stakeholders' expectations.	Leaders provide the organisation with the definition of a mission, vision and values and share it with the people in the organisation. Managers at all levels are focused on bringing the mission, vision and values into practice.	Stakeholders are confident about the constancy of purpose and steadiness of management. Managers are perceived to be role models. The quality of management has been measured e.g. through management assessment or job satisfaction measurements.

PART 2:

How the CAF External Feedback works



1. Implementation of CAF External Feedback at national level

The Member States will consider and follow the general common guidelines for the CAF External Feedback as described in further detail in this part. By following these guidelines, Member States will guarantee that the CAF External Feedback Procedure is organised in a qualitative way and that – as a consequence – the ‘Effective CAF User’ label enjoys a high standard across the European Union. The concrete implementation of the CAF External Feedback Procedure in the different EU Member States will be their own responsibility and depending on national circumstances.

The ‘National Organiser’ (NO) is appointed at national level to be in charge of the implementation of the CAF External Feedback in the country. The organisation in charge depends on the national context and can be a separate organisational unit at the ministry in charge of public administration or at another organisation, a separate organisation or others. Irrespective of a concrete organisational solution, the National Organiser must be recognisable and promoted as such.

The National Organiser selects a core group of CAF External Feedback Actors (the evaluators providing external feedback), organises training for them at national and/or European level, distributes the workload amongst them and evaluates their functioning at regular times. The National Organiser awards the Effective CAF User label, based on the recommendations of the CAF External Feedback Actors and informs the European CAF RC of the labels awarded so that this information can be incorporated in the European database. The underlying principle of the CAF External Feedback is that organisations can make use of it at minimum cost.

2. The role of the European CAF Resource Centre

Besides managing the CAF database, the European CAF Resource Centre at the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in Maastricht supports the Member States in implementing the CAF External Feedback Procedure through a number of initiatives: promoting the CAF External Feedback at European level, introducing the National CAF Correspondents to this procedure and offering a common European

training scheme for CAF External Feedback Actors, coordinating support for Member States that do not have a National Organiser and organising the CAF External Feedback Procedure for non EU members and European institutions.

The network of National CAF Correspondents regularly reports to the Directors-General of the European Public Administration Network (EUPAN), through the Innovative Public Services Group. In order to play its coordinating role, the CAF Resource Centre receives information from the Member States about the National Organiser in the different Member States.

3. Requirements to apply for the 'Effective CAF User' Label

Every public organisation using CAF – no matter how many times it has undertaken a self-assessment using the model – can apply for the CAF External Feedback.

CAF User organisations that believe they have done a good job in accordance with the model and require expert feedback on the quality of their CAF implementation within the organisation and its effects on the organisation can apply for the 'Effective CAF User label.

The eligibility criteria for an organisation to apply are:

- 1. The application should be made not before the elapse of 6 months but not exceeding the 12 months after the CAF self-assessment has taken place and the self-assessment report has been concluded and delivered.**

Working with the CAF implies carrying out a self-assessment and launching concrete improvement actions. In order to receive sufficient feedback on this second part, the organisation needs time to set up these improvements. Immediately after the self-assessment, motivation and dynamics are high resulting in the organisation to be willing to implement any proposals put forward during the self-assessment.

After a few months, some organisations could enter a phase of reduced enthusiasm. This might be a good moment for CAF External Feedback Actors to come in and help maintain enthusiasm.

- 2. The second requirement is that the organisation must register or be registered as a CAF User in the online European database of CAF Users, which is hosted by EIPA at caf.eipa.eu.**

The organisation can register itself or be registered through a registration process at national level, incorporated by the national CAF Correspondent in the European database, depending on the situation at national level. On the website of the European CAF Resource Centre at EIPA (www.eipa.eu/caf), the organisation can find the location of the person or organisation responsible for the CAF in their country.

Organisations meeting these two requirements may apply for the Effective CAF User label.

The CAF External Feedback Procedure consists of three phases to be undertaken by the organisation:

Phase 1: the application

Phase 2: the process of providing feedback

Phase 3: the final decision and awarding of the Effective CAF User label

These phases are described in detail below.

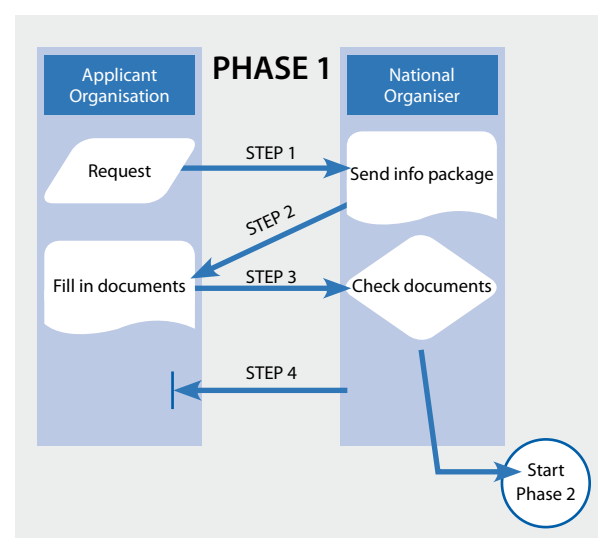
4. The phases in the CAF External Feedback Procedure

1

Phase 1: Application for the Effective CAF User Label

In this first phase, preparations are made for the actual feedback process. In this phase, the actors are the applicant organisation on the one hand and the National Organiser on the other hand.

Four different steps need to be taken in this phase.



STEP 1 The candidate public organisation contacts the National Organiser (NO) to request CAF External Feedback. To that end, it submits the statement (see Appendix 4) confirming its fulfilment of the two requirements.

STEP 2 The National Organiser while confirming receipt of application, will send a complete information package and invites the applicant to submit:

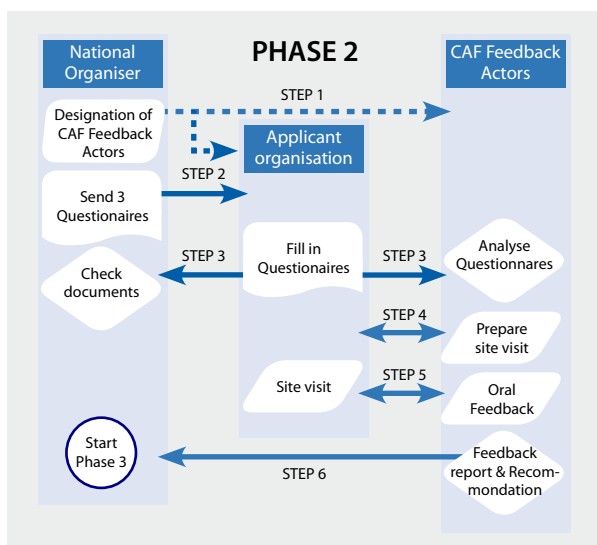
- a short presentation of the organisation;
- a brief description of the CAF self-assessment process;
- the last self-assessment report(s) presented to the management;
- the action plan(s) for implementation of improvements.

STEP 3 The applicant completes the requested information and returns it to the National Organiser in order to proceed towards the actual CAF External Feedback (Phase 2).

STEP 4 Once the required documents have been received by the National Organiser, the applicant organisation will receive a written acknowledgement, thereby signalling that the feedback procedure (Phase 2) could start.

2

Phase 2: Providing the Feedback



After the applicant organisation has fulfilled all the requirements in the first phase, the actual feedback procedure is launched in Phase 2.

This phase consists of six major steps and involves three different actors:

- the applicant organisation;
- the National Organiser; and
- the CAF External Feedback Actors.

These CAF External Feedback Actors are the persons who will judge the CAF assessment and its impact on the organisation and provide the organisation with useful feedback.

STEP 1 The National Organiser will designate two or more CAF External Feedback Actors which team number depend on the type, size and complexity of the applicant organisation.

The different aspects of the CAF External Feedback Actors' role are described in the next part.

STEP 2 The National Organiser informs the applicant organisation of the CAF External Feedback Actors in charge and sends the three CAF External Feedback questionnaires. The applicant organisation is invited to complete the three questionnaires based on its own judgement and to submit them to the CAF External Feedback Actors designated and/or to the National Organiser (based on national context/arrangements):

1. Questionnaire on the CAF self-assessment process;
2. Questionnaire on the improvement process;
3. Questionnaire on TQM Maturity.

STEP 3 The CAF External Feedback Actors will analyse the questionnaires submitted by the organisation.

STEP 4 Preparation of site visit: The CAF External Feedback Actors inform the organisation through an introductory meeting, common seminars or multimedia contacts on the main purpose of the site visit, in order to align expectations and decide upon the amount of documentation necessary and which persons, institutions and groups the CAF External Feedback Actors wish to have participate in interviews and workshops during the site visit. Part of this communication is to discuss the main themes and challenges of particular importance during the actual site visit. All participants in the CAF External Feedback should be aware of what they need to do to prepare for the site visit.

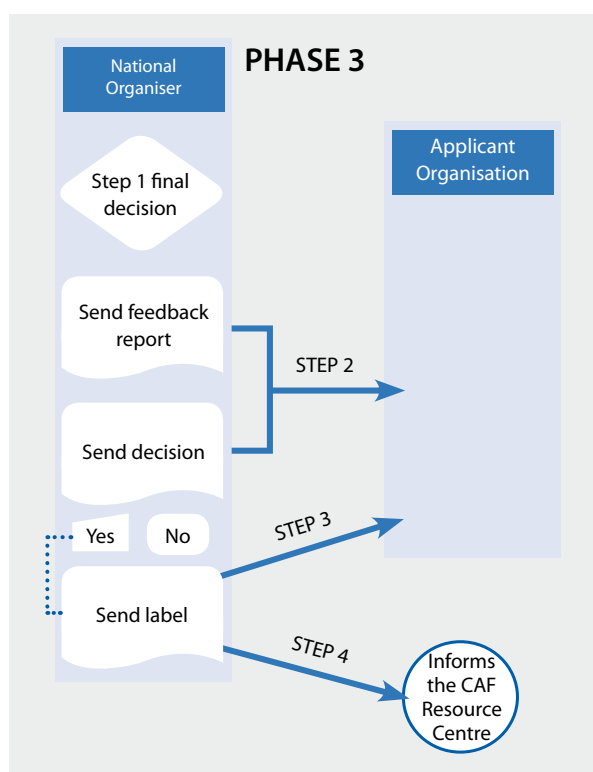
STEP 5 The site visit lasts a maximum of two days, depending on the type, size and complexity of the applicant organisation. The CAF External Feedback Actors examine whether the organisation has implemented the CAF model effectively:

1. They analyse the quality of the self-assessment process, using the answers to the process questionnaire as a starting point for discussions (Steps 1 to 6 of the CAF guidelines) with different participants of the SA process than the person(s) who completed the questionnaire.
2. They then discuss the drafting, communication and implementation of the improvement process, based on the answers to the improvement plan questionnaire (Steps 7 to 9 of the CAF guidelines), with a number of people involved in this process.
3. In order to evaluate the extent to which a TQM culture has been installed, different stakeholders will be interviewed, based upon the questionnaire on TQM Maturity.
4. The CAF External Feedback Actors provide the organisation with an initial verbal impression of their findings.

STEP 6 Based on all the information gathered before and during the site visit, the CAF External Feedback Actors prepare a feedback report within one month. The CAF External Feedback Actors submit this report to the National Organiser together with a recommendation as to whether or not the applicant organisation qualifies for the label of an 'Effective CAF User' (a template of the feedback report is shown in Appendix 3).

3

Phase 3: Decision/Designation of the CAF Label



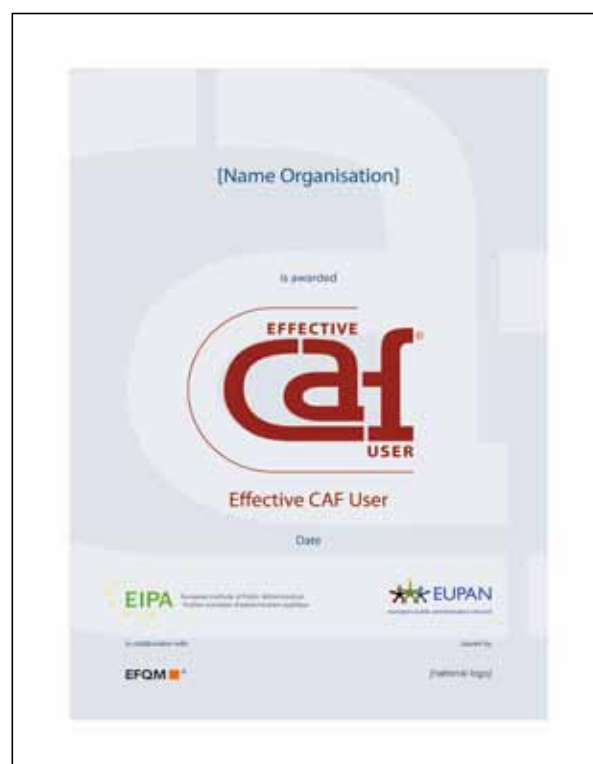
STEP 1 The National Organiser makes the final decision based on the report/recommendation of the CAF External Feedback Actors.

STEP 2 The National Organiser will send the feedback report together with the decision to the applicant organisation.

The organisation cannot appeal against the decision.

STEP 3 In the case of a positive decision, the applicant organisation receives the label 'Effective CAF User' in a timely manner.

STEP 4 The National Organiser informs the EIPA CAF Resource Centre when an organisation has been awarded the label. The CAF Resource Centre publishes the information (receipt of the label and date) in the online European database of CAF Users.



Remark 1:

The 'Effective CAF User' label expires after two years and may be renewed after a new self-assessment based on CAF, followed by a new application for the label.

Remark 2:

If the organisation is not awarded the label of 'Effective CAF user', it may apply again after completing a new self assessment based on CAF.

PART 3:

The CAF External Feedback Actors



The CAF External Feedback Actors play a crucial role in the CAF External Feedback. This part describes their role and tasks. In addition, the required competences; training; and Code of Conduct and behaviour are explained.

1. Roles, tasks and profile

The main task of the CAF External Feedback Actors in the Procedure is to:

- analyse the implementation of CAF through the process of self-assessment and improvement actions and analyse whether the organisation is implementing TQM values;
- provide feedback and suggestions on strengths and areas of improvement regarding the CAF implementation process;
- support and renew enthusiasm in the organisation to work with holistic quality development and self assessment with the CAF Model.

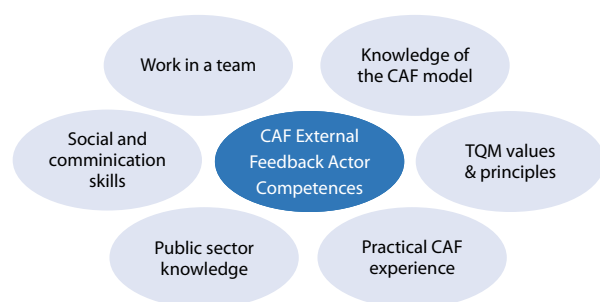
One of the goals of the CAF External Feedback is to promote peer review and bench learning within the European public administration. It is for this reason that the CAF External Feedback Actors are peers from within the public sector.

Being a CAF External Feedback Actor requires a balance of personal and professional skills coupled with a commitment to timely and appropriate conduct. In order to conduct the CAF External Feedback process competently, the CAF External Feedback Actor needs to have a broad knowledge and experience of management processes and development and change processes within public sector organisations. The CAF External Feedback Actors can obtain the necessary competencies from a variety of sources including work experience (e.g. EFQM assessor), education and specialized training.

The CAF External Feedback Actor does not need to have been a manager and trained as an EFQM assessor or validator. The competencies achieved by such training are however highly useful in the feedback process. Instead, the CAF External Feedback Actor must have participated in the European or national training course required to become a CAF External Feedback Actor (acknowledged by the National CAF Correspondent). Highly experienced CAF Users in the public sector are part of the target group for participation in the training courses for External Feedback Actors; this promotes exchange between organisations and increases knowledge within the organisations.

2. Competences needed to conduct the CAF External Feedback

In order to fulfil the role described, CAF External Feedback Actors need to possess some general competences. Such competencies are:



- **Understand the CAF Model and its internal linkages.**

This includes understanding the structure and content of the CAF Model and the linkages between and within results and enablers.

- **Practical experience with CAF and/or other TQM models as a framework for self-assessment and quality improvements.** The CAF External Feedback Actor must have experience with implementation of the CAF model and/or other TQM models.

- **Understanding of the fundamental TQM principles and values.**

The CAF External Feedback Actor must have a good understanding of the fundamental values of TQM and how the values and principles can be applied in practical quality development in organisations.

- **Demonstrate an understanding of different public sector organisations and their varying demands and needs.**

The CAF External Feedback Actor must be able to understand the different demands and needs with regard to implementation of the self-assessment process and the improvement actions. The CAF External Feedback Actor does not use the examples and procedures contained within the CAF External Feedback material as a checklist, but understands that the approaches that are effective and appropriate in one organisation can be insufficient in other public organisations due to different values, leadership, people and internal processes.

- **Practice good interpersonal skills and effective communication.**

The main task of the CAF External Feedback Actor is to provide precise and motivating feedback that supports the organisation's continuing dedication to holistic and systematic quality development through self-assessment.

The CAF External Feedback Actor should have skills and competences to ensure that the CAF External Feedback process is conducted in a way which supports learning, collaboration and dialogue. He/she must therefore be able to communicate effectively in the context of the specific type of institution and use non-abusive language.

- **Able to work in a team.**

When approaching and working with the applicant organisation within the context of the CAF External Feedback, the CAF External Feedback Actor must act in a collegial way, sharing the workload and acting in a complementary manner.

3. Training required

As the CAF External Feedback is a common European initiative, the CAF External Feedback Actors need to share the most important principles, aims, values and methodologies of the Procedure. Training is therefore provided at national level by the National Organiser and/or the organisations responsible, and at European level by the European CAF Resource Centre at the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA) in Maastricht. A minimum common core has been defined for this training. This two-day training course consists of five parts, each of them serving particular aims.

Part 1: The Common Assessment Framework

Goals: Presentation of the main features of the Common Assessment Framework and the process of its implementation.

Results: The CAF External Feedback Actors need to know the specificities of the CAF model, the context of public sector organisation and the different steps for applying the CAF model as described in the CAF guidelines.

Part 2: The CAF External Feedback: Philosophy and System

Goals: The main features and pillars of the CAF External Feedback Procedure are presented.

Results: The participants need to know the background behind the need for a CAF External Feedback Procedure, have an in-depth insight into

the philosophy and ambitions of the system and be able to translate these, via the main features and pillars, to applicant organisations.

Part 3: How to Evaluate (applying the CAF External Feedback)

Goals: Presentation of the detailed steps in the CAF External Feedback Procedure.

Results: The participants know, understand and are able to work with the different questionnaires and scoring guides (theory). They know how to carry out a sound document analysis and conduct the site visit.

Part 4: Code of Conduct and behaviour

Goals: Presentation of the Code of Conduct and behaviour for the CAF External Feedback Actors.

Results: The Actors know their role as well as what to do and how to behave.

Part 5: Reporting and giving feedback

Goals: Presentation on how to report and give feedback.

Results: The CAF External Feedback actors are able to provide feedback (orally and written) and report in a professional and satisfying manner.

4. Code of Conduct and behaviour for the CAF External Feedback Actors

The Code of Conduct is a common framework which states the values and principles of the CAF External Feedback and the requirements set for the conduct of the CAF External Feedback Actors. At national level, the national CAF Correspondent (and/or the National Organiser) may describe additional principles and requirements for the conduct of the CAF External Feedback Actors.

The CAF External Feedback Actors must maintain high standards of ethical behaviour, which means that he/she must maintain independence, conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful fashion, perform their duties diligently, competently and in a timely manner and maintain a personal position which is free from conflicts of interest.

- **Independence**

They must maintain sufficient independence and always give appropriate, effective and correct feedback to the applicant organisation. This includes maintaining impartiality and guarding against bias at all times.

- **Personal opportunity or gain**

They must not have past or future ties (financial or otherwise) with the applicant organisation, which could influence the feedback and validation process.

- **Conflict of interest**

They must identify and avoid any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest with the applicant organisation which may throw doubt about the independence of the CAF External Feedback Actors. Any identified conflicts of interest must be brought to the attention of the National CAF correspondent or delegated organisation, which will act on the information.

A conflict of interest could, for example, be the fact that the CAF External Feedback Actor has been or is an employee of the organisation or is employed by an organisation with a conflicting interest towards that organisation. Furthermore, a CAF External Feedback Actor cannot participate in giving feedback to organisations where he or she has participated in the implementation of CAF (thereby validating his/her own work).

- **Courtesy and respect**

They must always conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful fashion, e.g. by responding promptly to requests for information, being punctual and not engaging in activities, which would bring the CAF External Feedback Actor, CAF External Feedback process or the CAF Model into disrepute.

- **Diligence**

They must conduct themselves in a diligent, competent and timely manner. If the role as CAF External Feedback Actor cannot be carried out in such a manner, the assignment should not be taken on.

- **Confidentiality**

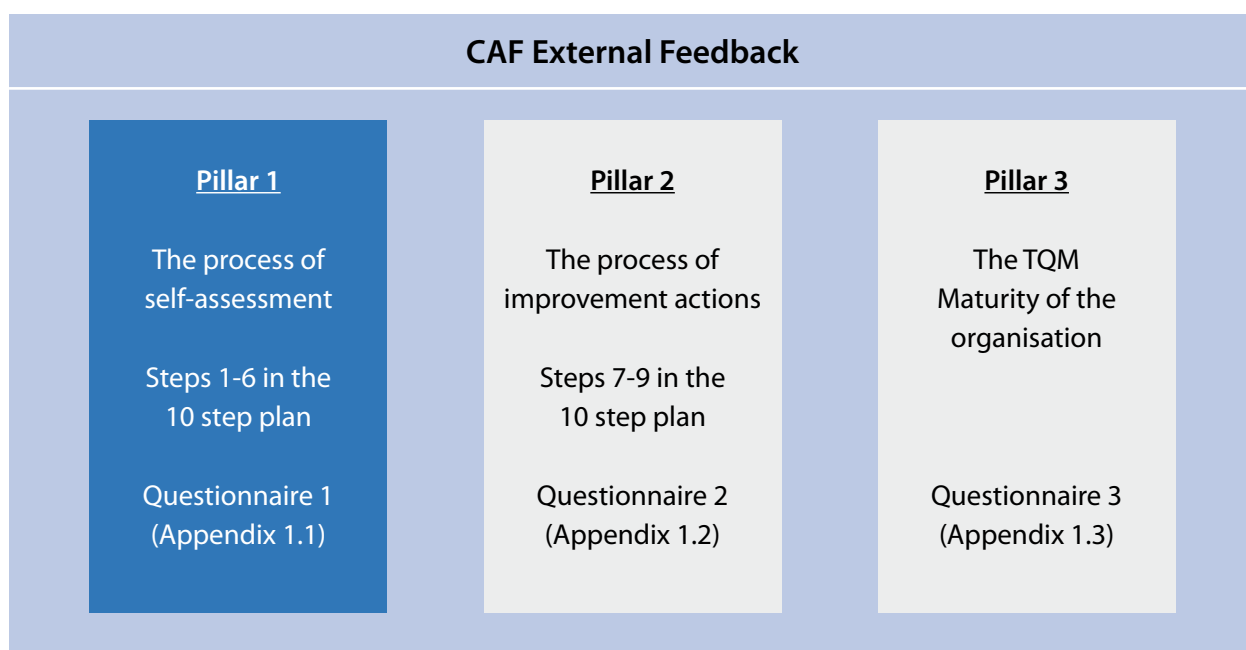
Communication and the information gained during the CAF External Feedback process is confidential and may not be discussed or divulged to third parties (except to the persons/organisation responsible for awarding the 'Effective CAF User' label).

- **Positive attitude**

To support/instil enthusiasm in the organisation.

Appendix 1.1

Questionnaire on Pillar 1 The self-assessment process questionnaire



Reference

The reference of the questionnaire is the 'Ten steps to improve an organisation with CAF' as defined in the chapter entitled 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' of the CAF 2013. The activities of each step have been adjusted and expanded to take into consideration the lessons learned from the relevant experiences at European level.

The following questionnaire includes questions relating to the first six steps, which focus on the planning and implementation of the self-assessment process.

Steps to be assessed

The questionnaire covers the first six of the ten steps defined in the 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' and is not meant for validating the scores.

Evaluation scale

The evaluation scale has five levels.

1	The activities have been carried out in a very limited way.
2	The activities have been carried out in a limited way.
3	The activities have been carried out in an acceptable way.
4	The activities have been carried out in a satisfying (satisfactory) way.
5	The activities have been carried out in an outstanding way.

This evaluation scale has been detailed for each activity in phrases defining the interpretation of the real situation of the organisation with regard to the specific theme.

Evidence: definition

A various range of tangible and intangible documents/facts/information delivered before and during the site visits.

Step 1: Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA)					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
1.1 Assure commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process.	There is no evidence of commitment and ownership of the management	There is some evidence of commitment of the management for launching the process, but limited to some of the managers involved	There is evidence of commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process	There is clear evidence of commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process, acting as guide and sponsor, and communicating the targets and advantages	There is strong evidence of commitment and ownership of all the management for launching the process, acting as guide and sponsor, communicating the objectives and advantages and participating in the project definition
1.2 Assure a clear management decision regarding completion of the SA in consultation with the organisation, the scope of the SA (SA covers the whole organisation or only parts/units/departments...) and the overall objective of the SA.	There is no evidence of a decision by the management. The decision has been taken by one or more persons without consultation with the management	There is some evidence of consultation with the management, but without a discussion of the criteria for the decision and choice, a formal decision and a clear definition of the objectives	There is evidence of consultation with the management team and of a formal decision, but the criteria for the choice and the objectives are not clearly defined	There is clear evidence of the management decision to realise the evaluation, within the framework of the periodic meetings, involving the heads of the functions. The decision has been formalised in a document and the SA objectives have been clearly defined, but the criteria for the choice are not completely evident	There is strong evidence of a management decision, taken after a well-pondered discussion involving the heads of the competent functions, with a definition of the scope of the SA based on well-defined criteria. The decision and the scope have been formalised in a document. The SA objectives and advantages for the stakeholders have been clearly defined
1.3 Define the framework for the SA process and the following actions, and plan the SA activities.	There is no evidence of a real plan	There is some evidence of a plan, but it partly covers the SA process and the subsequent actions	There is evidence of a plan for the SA process and the subsequent actions, but it is not completely structured (responsibilities, resources, time scheduling)	There is clear evidence of planning for the SA process and the subsequent actions, including responsibilities, resources, time scheduling and monitoring	There is strong evidence of planning for the SA process and the subsequent actions, in coherence with the plans and strategies of the organisation. The plan includes responsibilities, resources, time scheduling
1.4 Appoint an SA process leader with a high level of knowledge of the organisation or form an SA Committee headed by the SA process leader.	There is no evidence of formalised tasks assigned by the management	There is some evidence of a task assigned by management, but not formalised and without clear criteria for the choice	There is evidence of a formalised task assigned by management, but there is limited evidence of appropriate criteria for the choice (including the appropriate knowledge of CAF model)	There is clear evidence of a formalised task assigned by the management, with definition of the SA leader on the basis of knowledge of the organisation and appropriate knowledge of CAF model	There is strong evidence of a formalised task assigned by the management, with definition of the SA leader on the basis of knowledge of the organisation, expertise of the CAF model and acknowledged leadership
1.5 Define the scoring panel to be used.	There is no evidence of definition of the scoring panel, in coherence with the model	There is some evidence of definition of the scoring panel but it is not fully coherent with the model and the differences are not completely acceptable	There is evidence of definition of the scoring panel to be used, coherent with the model, but the coherence with the SA plan (resources, time scheduling) has not been verified	There is clear evidence of definition of the scoring panel to be used, completely coherent with the model and the SA plan (resources, time scheduling).	There is strong evidence of definition. The scoring panel is completely coherent with the model and the SA plan (resources, time scheduling). Its choice has been evaluated and is based on the organisation context and maturity
1.6 Allocate resources for the SA and define how to prioritise distribution of the resources.	There is no evidence of evaluation of resources required for the SA	There is some evidence of the evaluation of resources required for the SA, but the allocation of the required resources is not evident	There is evidence of evaluation of the resources required for the SA. The allocation of the resources has been defined, but the availability of resources is not evident for all the activities	There is clear evidence of evaluation of the resources required for the SA. The allocation of the resources has been defined and their availability is essentially evident, but prioritisation criteria are not evident	There is strong evidence of evaluation of the resources required for the SA. The resources have been allocated, defining their priorities. The availability of required resources and the prioritisation criteria are evident for all positions

Step 2: Communicate the self-assessment project					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
2.1 Define a communication plan, to include the expected benefits, the goal and the activities of the SA.	There is no evidence of a communication plan	There is some evidence of a communication plan, but the contents do not guarantee adequate information about the SA (objectives, goal and activities, stakeholders involved etc.)	There is evidence of a communication plan, including sufficient information about the SA (objectives, goal and activities, relevant stakeholders involved etc.)	There is clear evidence of a communication plan, including detailed information about the objectives, the goal, the expected benefits and a description of the activities. The communication plan is addressed to the relevant stakeholders	There is strong evidence of a communication plan, with a detailed indication of the objectives and goal of the activities, the expected benefits for the different stakeholders and a detailed description of the activities. The communication plan is addressed to all the stakeholders and defines the involvement of the different parties in the plan
2.2 Implement the communication plan using different tools	There is no evidence of implementation of the communication plan and/or of the defined tools, or the communication is limited and generic	There is some evidence of implementation of the communication plan and of the tools used, but the plan is implemented in a limited way, or the communication is not completely adequate	There is evidence of implementation of the communication plan, using different tools; the contents of the communication are adequate	There is clear evidence of implementation of the communication plan, using different tools in an evaluated and defined way. The contents of the communication are complete	There is strong evidence of implementation of the communication plan, using the appropriate tools in the different phases and for different parties in an evaluated and defined way. The contents of the communication are complete and the effectiveness of the communication has been verified
2.3 Communicate during the different phases of the SA process to all relevant stakeholders and stimulate the involvement in the SA of the top and middle managers, staff and employees	There is no evidence of communication in the different phases of the SA and to relevant stakeholders, and there are no initiatives for involvement of internal parties	There is some evidence of implementation of the communication plan, but not in a systematic way in the phases of the SA and / or not to the relevant stakeholders, and/or it is not adequate to stimulate the involvement of the internal parties	There is evidence of implementation of the communication plan, realised in a systematic way in the main phases of the SA and to the key relevant stakeholders, in an adequate way to stimulate the involvement of internal parties	There is clear evidence of implementation of the communication plan, realised in a systematic way in all the phases of the SA and addressed to the relevant stakeholders, and it is clearly addressed to the involvement of the internal parties	There is strong evidence of implementation of the communication plan, realised in all the different phases of the SA and addressed to all the relevant stakeholders, and it is clearly and specifically addressed to the involvement of all the relevant internal parties (top and middle managers, staff and employees)

Step 3: Create a self-assessment group(s)					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
3.1 Decide if it is necessary to create one or more SA groups, define their number, create and organise them (choosing their chair, assigning responsibilities to each member as needed).	There is no evidence of the decision to create SA group(s) and to assign the chair and responsibilities	There is some evidence of the decision and criteria to create an SA group, but the criteria for the choice of its size and the assignment of the chair and responsibilities are not clear	There is evidence of the decision and criteria to create the SA group(s) and to define their size, but the assignment of the responsibilities inside the group(s) is partial or has not formally been defined	There is clear evidence of the decision and criteria to create the SA group(s), on the basis of an evaluation of the number of the SA groups and their size; the creation of the SA group(s) was formalised with the appointment of the chair and the assignment of tasks and responsibilities	There is strong evidence of the decision and criteria to create the SA group(s), on the basis of an evaluation of the number of the SA groups and their size, documenting the reasons for the choices; their creation was formalised with the appointment of the chair and the assignment of all the required tasks and responsibilities to each member
3.2 Decide if the manager(s) should be part of the SA group(s).	There is no evidence of an evaluation and decision about the participation of the manager(s) in the SA group(s)	There is some evidence of a decision about the participation of the manager(s) in the SA group(s), but the evaluations for the decision are not clear	There is evidence of an evaluation and decision about the participation of the manager(s) in the SA group(s)	There is clear evidence of evaluations and a decision about the participation of the manager(s) in the group(s), considering the culture of the organisation and indicating the possible role of the managers	There is strong evidence of formal evaluations and a decision about the participation of the manager(s) in the group(s), considering the culture and tradition of the organisation and indicating the role of the managers in the different phases
3.3 Select the participants of the SA group(s) on the basis of specified criteria such as their knowledge of the organisation, their personal skills and their representativeness.	There is no evidence of criteria for selection of the participants of the SA group(s)	There is some evidence of criteria for the selection of the participants of the SA group(s), but they are not or are only partly based on knowledge of the organisation, personal skills and representativeness	There is evidence of criteria for the selection of most of the participants of the SA group(s), based on specified criteria such as their knowledge of the organisation, their personal skills and their representativeness	There is clear evidence of criteria for the selection of all the participants of the SA group(s), based on specified criteria such as their knowledge of the organisation, their personal skills and their representativeness. The selection criteria have been documented	There is strong and documented evidence of criteria for selection of all the participants in the SA group, based on knowledge of the organisation, personal skills and representativeness and participation of all internal functions involved; the characteristics of the selected participants have been taken into account in the definition of the roles and in the organisation of the group(s)

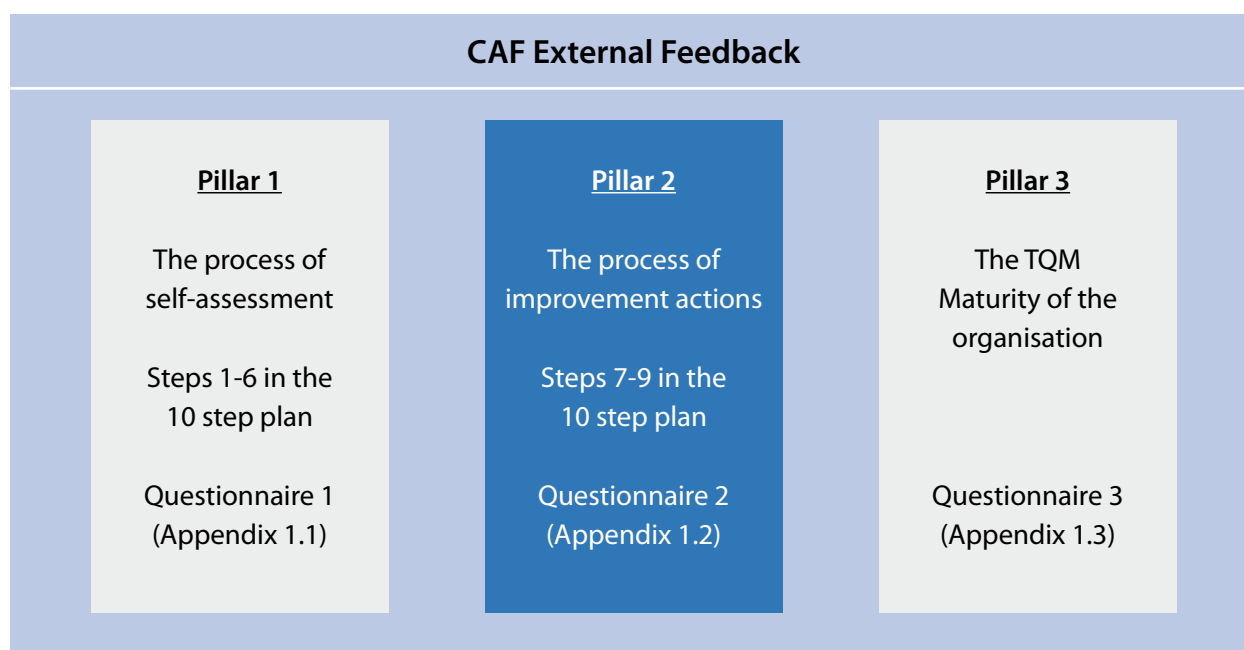
Step 4: Organise training					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
4.1 Organise information/training activities for leaders and managers (top and middle) to promote ownership and commitment.	There is no evidence of information / training activities for leaders and managers	There is some evidence of information / training activities but it does not involve all the proper levels and/or it is not adequate to promote ownership and commitment	There is evidence of information / training activities for the leaders and managers to promote ownership and commitment	There is clear evidence of information / training activities, based on the needs of the different management levels and to promote ownership and commitment at each level	There is strong evidence of information / training activities, organised to take into account the different aspects (model, SA process, metrics, steps, etc.), based on the needs of the different management levels to promote ownership and commitment at each level
4.2 Prepare a plan for all the training activities of the SA group(s).	There is no evidence of a plan for training activities	There is some evidence of a plan for the training activities, but the contents are partial and not adequate for the needs of the groups (completeness, time, teachers, ...)	There is evidence of a plan for training activities for the SA group(s); the plan has been formalised and the contents are adequate for the needs of the groups (completeness, time, teachers, ...)	There is clear evidence of planning for training activities for the SA group(s); the activities have been planned in detail, the feasibility has been verified, the plan has been formalised and the contents are adequate for the needs of the groups (completeness, time, teachers, ...)	There is strong evidence of training activities for the SA group(s); they have been planned in detail, the feasibility has been verified, the plan has been formalised and the contents are adequate for the needs of the groups (completeness, time, teachers, ...); the plan includes steps to verify the effectiveness of the training activities
4.3 Train the members of the SA group(s).	There is no evidence of training of the SA group(s)	There is some evidence of realisation of the training, but not complete with respect to the plan or not adequate for the needs of the members of the SA group(s), with regard to contents, participation, time scheduling and teachers	There is evidence of realisation of the training activities. The training respects the key elements of the plan and it is adequate for the needs of the members of the SA group(s), with regard to contents, participation, time scheduling and teachers	There is clear evidence of realisation of the training activities. The members of the SA group(s) are adequately trained according to the specific needs of each member and to the training plan.	There is strong evidence of realisation of the training activities. The members of the SA group(s) are adequately trained according to the specific needs of each member and to the training plan. The effectiveness of the training has been positively verified

Step 5: Perform the self-assessment					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
5.1 Relevant documents and information for SA are collected and made available to all the SA groups	There is no evidence of relevant documents and information for SA being made available to SA group(s)	There is some evidence of documents being made available, but they do not sufficiently cover the necessary information for all the key processes and results of the organisation and for all the areas of the model	There is evidence of documents collected and made available. They cover the key processes and results of the organisation and most areas of the model	There is clear evidence of documents and information for SA being collected and made available. They cover all the relevant processes and results of the organisation and all the areas of the model	There is strong evidence of documents and information for SA being collected and made available. They consider all the relevant processes / projects and results, and all the areas of the model. They provide information on planned activities (plan), their realisation (do), verification (check) and improvement (act) for all areas of the model
5.2 The members of the SA group(s) make up a list of strengths and areas for improvement and a score for each sub-criterion of CAF.	There is no evidence of lists of strengths and areas for improvement and/or scores being prepared by the members of SA group(s)	There is some evidence of individual inputs being made available with some indications of strengths, areas for improvement and/or scores, but they are not available from all the members and/or are not complete for each sub-criterion	There is evidence of individual inputs being made available from all the members, with strengths, areas for improvement and/or scores, complete for each sub-criterion of CAF	There is clear evidence of individual inputs with a list of strengths, areas for improvement and scores from all the members of the SA group(s), complete for each sub-criterion of CAF; the inputs are structured and detailed to address the improvement actions	There is strong evidence of individual inputs with a list of detailed and suitable strengths, areas for improvement and scores, available from all the members of the SA group(s) and complete for each sub-criterion of CAF; the individual inputs are detailed with notes and comments to support the analyses and the improvement actions
5.3 The chair collects the individual inputs and prepares the consensus meeting assuring all conditions for its success.	There is no evidence of collection of the individual inputs for use in the consensus meeting. No evidence of preparation for the consensus meeting	There is some evidence of collection of the individual inputs, but there is no aggregation and analysis for use in the consensus meeting. Limited evidence of preparation for the consensus meeting	There is evidence of collection of the individual inputs and aggregation for the consensus meeting. The consensus meeting is planned	There is clear evidence of collection of the individual inputs for the consensus meeting. There is clear evidence of preparation for the consensus meeting (time scheduling and roles, availability of relevant documents)	There is strong evidence of collection, aggregation and analysis of the individual inputs as a basis for the evaluations in the consensus meetings. A detailed preparation of the consensus meeting is evident, with time scheduling, assignment of roles collection and availability of relevant documents, definition of rules and criteria to facilitate the consensus etc.
5.4 The SA group reaches consensus on strengths, areas for improvement and scoring for each sub-criterion.	There is no evidence of a real consensus process on strengths, areas for improvement and scoring to obtain a final evaluation	There is some evidence of the consensus process but it does not cover all the sub-criteria for strengths, areas for improvement and scores	There is evidence of the consensus process, complete for all the sub-criteria for strengths, areas for improvement and scores	There is clear evidence of the consensus process, effective and complete for strengths, areas for improvement and scores with a defined approach. The evaluations are formally documented and agreed	There is clear evidence of the consensus process, effective and complete: the individual assessments are documented and the consensus is formally agreed by all the participants, with strengths, areas for improvement and scores. The evaluations and the decisions taken, and the variations from individual evaluation and consensus are formally registered and analysed

Step 6: Prepare a report describing the results of self-assessment					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
6.1 Edit a final report containing the following elements for each sub-criterion: • strengths • areas for improvement • score	There is no evidence of a formal final report for the activities of SA or the final report does not include information on strengths and/or areas for improvement and/or a score	There is some evidence of a final report for the activities of SA, including some indications on strengths, areas for improvement and scores, but the indications are not complete or do not cover each sub-criterion of the model	There is evidence of a final report covering all the sub-criteria of the model, and indicating strengths, areas for improvement and scores.	There is clear evidence of a final report covering all the sub-criteria of the model, and indicating strengths, areas for improvement and scores. The report contains information and comments to address the organisation in order to evaluate corrective and improvement actions	There is strong evidence of a final report covering all the sub-criteria of the model, and indicating in detail the strengths, areas for improvement and scores. The report contains information and comments to address the organisation in order to evaluate effective corrective and improvement actions and their weight and priority
6.2 Present the final report to the Senior Management of the organisation	There is no evidence of presentation of the final report to the senior management	There is some evidence of presentation of the final report to the senior management but there is no evidence of presentation in formal and documented meeting(s)	There is evidence of presentation of the final report to the senior management of the organisation in formal and documented meeting(s)	There is clear evidence of presentation of the final report to the senior management of the organisation. It has been presented and discussed in formal and documented meeting(s), with a detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses	There is strong evidence of presentation of the final report to the senior management of the organisation. It has been presented and discussed in formal and documented meeting(s), in which a detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses and a first evaluation of the possible intervention areas have been made
6.3. Communicate the main results to people in the organisation and other relevant stakeholders.	There is no evidence of communication of the SA results	There is some evidence of communication of the main results, but it does not involve all the relevant internal and external parties	There is evidence of communication of the main results, addressed to the people in the organisation and to all other relevant stakeholders	There is clear evidence of communication of the main results, with detailed information, in a formal way and with appropriate tools. The communication was addressed to the people in the organisation and to other relevant stakeholders	There is clear evidence of communication of the main results, with detailed information, in a formal way and with appropriate tools. The communication was addressed to the people in the organisation and to all other relevant stakeholders. The information was clearly addressed to involve interested parties in the corrective and improvement actions

Appendix 1.2

Questionnaire on Pillar 2 The improvement plan questionnaire



Reference

The reference of the questionnaire is the 'Ten steps to improve an organisation with CAF' as defined in the chapter on 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' of the CAF 2013. The activities of each step have been adjusted and expanded to take into consideration the lessons learned from the relevant experiences at European level.

The questionnaire covers the steps from seven to nine.

Steps to be assessed

CAF External Feedback covers the planning and the process of improvement and is not meant for assessing the results of the improvement actions.

Evaluation scale

The evaluation scale has five levels.

1	The activities have been carried out in a very limited way.
2	The activities have been carried out in a limited way.
3	The activities have been carried out in an acceptable way.
4	The activities have been carried out in a satisfying (satisfactory) way.
5	The activities have been carried out in an outstanding way.

This evaluation scale has been detailed for each activity in phrases defining the interpretation of the real situation of the organisation with regard to the specific theme.

Evidence: definition

A various range of tangible and intangible documents/facts/information delivered before and during the site visits.

Step 7: Draft an improvement plan, based on the accepted self-assessment report

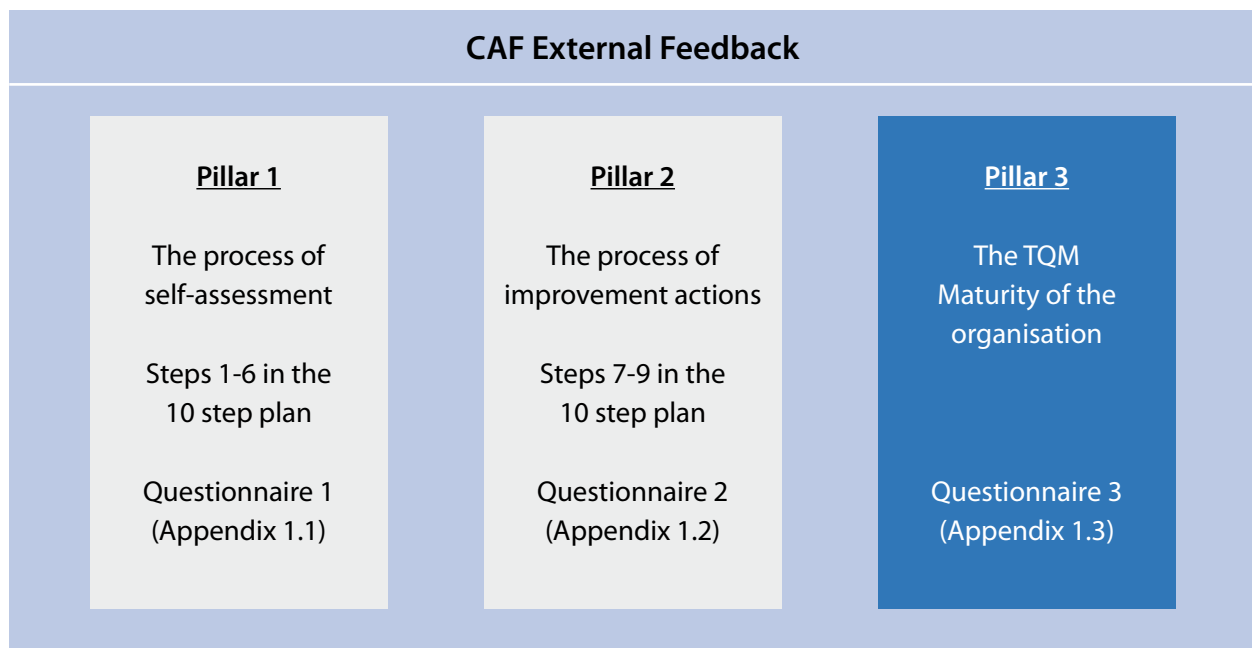
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
7.1 Collect all proposals for actions for improvement, including the ideas formulated during the SA.	There is no evidence of collection of ideas and proposals for improvement actions	There is some evidence of collection of proposals for improvement, but without the involvement of the interested functions and/or without a complete analysis of the results of the SA	There is evidence of collection of proposals for improvement actions, from the involved functions and for all the results of the SA, taking into consideration the ideas formulated during the SA.	There is clear evidence of collection of proposals for improvement actions, from all the involved functions, in a formal way, starting from and taking into consideration the ideas formulated during the SA. The proposals are derived from a complete analysis of all the results of the SA	There is evidence of collection of proposals for improvement actions, in a formal way, starting from and taking into consideration the ideas formulated during the SA. The proposals are based on a detailed and documented analysis (meetings, etc.) of all the results of the SA, within each function involved
7.2 Prioritise improvement actions with regards to their effectiveness and feasibility.	There is no evidence of prioritisation of improvement actions or use of prioritisation criteria	There is some evidence of prioritisation of the improvement actions, but the criteria are not clear or coherent	There is evidence of prioritisation of the improvement actions, on the basis of defined and coherent criteria	There is clear evidence of prioritisation of the improvement actions, on the basis of defined and coherent criteria. The prioritisation criteria are documented, taking into consideration the impact on strategy and objectives of the organisation, and the feasibility of the actions	There is strong evidence of prioritisation of the improvement actions, on the basis of defined and coherent criteria. The analysis of possible actions, the prioritisation criteria and the evaluations are documented, taking into consideration a quantized evaluation of the impact on strategy and objectives of the organisation, and the feasibility of the actions
7.3 Define a structured action plan for the selected improvement actions based on the PDCA Cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act).	There is no evidence of an action plan or the action plan cannot define the main phases of the activities (start, phases of activities, intermediate checks, final check(s) etc.)	There is some evidence of an action plan, but the main defined phases are not based on the PDCA cycle (approach, deployment, check and reviews, further improvement actions)	There is evidence of an action plan for the selected improvement actions, based on the PDCA cycle (approach, deployment, check and reviews, further improvement actions)	There is clear evidence of a structured action plan for the selected improvement actions, defining the scheduling for the approach, the deployment of the actions, the checks and reviews during the development of the actions	There is strong evidence of a structured action plan for the selected improvement actions, defining for the single phases and activities a detailed scheduling for the approach, the deployment of the actions for the target areas, the checks and reviews during the development of the actions. The plan contains the definition of further improvement actions and follow-up
7.4 Establish ways to measure the performance of the actions and the results.	There is no evidence of a definition of indicators, targets or metrics for all or most of the improvement actions	There is some evidence of a definition of indicators, targets or metrics, but not complete or adequate to measure the performance and results of the actions (lack of indicators and/or targets; lack of definition of metrics, ...)	There is evidence of a definition of indicators, targets and metrics, adequate to measure the performance and results of the actions	There is clear evidence of indicators, targets and metrics of the improvement actions, defined in a complete, quantitative and consistent way for each action. The indicators and targets consider the expected results in terms of outputs and outcome	There is strong evidence of indicators, targets and metrics of the improvement actions, defined in a complete, quantitative and consistent way for each action. The indicators and targets consider the expected performance and results in terms of outputs and outcome, effectiveness, efficiency and external benchmarking
7.5. Integrate the action plan into the normal strategic planning process.	There is no evidence of correlation between the action plan and the strategic planning of the organisation	There is some evidence of integration of the action plan (but with limited correlation of time scheduling and/or planning of resources and/or impact of the actions on strategic objectives)	There is evidence of integration of the action plan into the strategic plan of the organisation (time scheduling, resources, impact of the actions on the strategic objectives)	There is clear evidence of integration of the action plan into the strategic plan of the organisation (time scheduling, resources, impact of the actions on the strategic objectives, checks and reviews and related responsibilities)	There is strong evidence of integration of the action plan into the strategic plan of the organisation (time scheduling, resources, impact of the actions on the strategic objectives, checks and reviews, involvement of leaders, etc.); the SA activity and the consequent action plan are formalised as part of the strategic planning and control

Step 8: Communicate the improvement plan					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
8.1. Define a communication plan - the appropriate information with the appropriate media to the appropriate target group, addressed to all the stakeholders - of the improvement actions.	There is no evidence of a communication plan for main stakeholders and/or with appropriate information	There is some evidence of a communication plan (but not addressed to the main stakeholders and/or limited information)	There is evidence of a communication plan, addressed to the main stakeholders, with appropriate information and appropriate media. The communication plan considers a few phases of the improvement activities	There is clear evidence of a communication plan, addressed to all the stakeholders, with appropriate information and with the use of appropriate media. The communication plan considers the main phases of the improvement activities	There is strong evidence of a communication plan: the plan is complete and detailed, addressed to all the stakeholders, with extensive information and with the use of the appropriate media for the different target groups. The communication plan considers all the different phases of the improvement activities
8.2. Implement the communication plan.	There is no evidence of implementation of a communication plan	There is some evidence of implementation of a communication plan (the communication plan that has been applied in part or the extent to the stakeholders and to different phases has not been respected)	There is evidence of implementation of the communication plan addressed to the different stakeholders, with appropriate information and with appropriate media, as planned or with limited modifications	There is clear evidence of implementation of the communication plan addressed to different stakeholders, with appropriate information and with appropriate media, as planned. The implementation is documented	There is clear evidence of implementation of the communication plan, and the effectiveness of the communication (to different stakeholders, with appropriate information and with appropriate media) has been verified and improved. The implementation is fully documented
8.3. Inform the relevant stakeholders regularly – especially the people of the organisation - on the status and progress, including evaluations and experiences.	There is no evidence of information for relevant stakeholders on the status, progress and related evaluations and experiences	There is some evidence of information on the status, progress and related evaluations and experiences, but the information is not provided regularly, or is limited to the status and progress, or limited to few stakeholders	There is evidence of information to the people of the status, progress and related evaluations and experiences. The information is provided regularly to the people of the organisation and limited for other relevant stakeholders (only some phases, as start, end of activities, ...)	There is clear evidence of information to all the stakeholders on the status of activities, progress, evaluations and experiences, for all the relevant phases of the improvement plan.	There is strong evidence of information to all the stakeholders on the status of activities, progress, evaluations and experiences, for all the relevant phases of the improvement plan. The lessons learned and the opportunities to extend the experiences are investigated, documented and communicated

Step 9: Implement the improvement plan					
Levels	1	2	3	4	5
Actions					
9.1 Define clear ownership of the improvement program and the projects, and ensure transparency in task and responsibility delegation.	There is no evidence of definition of ownership of the program and the projects	There is some evidence of definition of ownership for the programs and/or for the projects, but the level or the coherence of the roles for the assigned responsibilities are not demonstrated Limited evidence of transparency and responsibility delegation	There is evidence of definition of ownership for the improvement program and for the projects. The ownership is communicated, ensuring transparency and responsibility delegation. The level of assigned responsibilities is adequate and the roles of the owners are coherent with the activities to be realised	There is clear evidence of definition of ownership for the improvement program and the projects. The level of assigned responsibilities is adequate and the roles of the owners are coherent with the activities to be realised. The delegation of responsibilities is formally defined and communicated to guarantee transparency and to promote involvement and collaboration	There is strong evidence of definition of ownership for the entire improvement program and for the single projects and activities, at appropriate level and coherent with the activities to be realised. The delegation of responsibilities is formally defined and communicated to all the interested stakeholders to guarantee transparency and to promote involvement and collaboration
9.2 Implement the improvement plan as scheduled.	There is no evidence of implementation of the improvement plan	There is some evidence of implementation of the improvements plan, but relevant deficiencies are evident in terms of completeness, extent of deployment, controls, monitoring, changes to the planning due to lack of resources or changes to priorities etc.	There is evidence of implementation of the improvement plan, with a substantial alignment to the scheduling. The deviations from the scheduled plan are documented and motivated. No relevant deficiencies are evident in terms of completeness, extent of deployment, controls, monitoring, changes to the planning due to lack of resources or changes to priorities etc.	There is clear evidence of implementation of the improvement plan, with a structured control. The deviations from the scheduled plan are limited and do not reduce the completeness, extent of deployment, controls or monitoring; they are analysed, documented and motivated	There is strong evidence of implementation of the improvement plan, with a structured control. The deviations from the scheduled plan are analysed and documented, and are clearly finalised to improve the scheduling and to assure the attainment of the best possible objectives (completeness of the activities, extent of deployment, controls, monitoring etc.)
9.3 Involve employees in the different improvement actions to ensure anchoring of the improvement projects throughout the institution.	There is no evidence of involvement of employees in the improvement actions	There is some evidence of involvement of employees in the improvement actions and of an approach to anchor the projects throughout the institution	There is evidence of involvement of employees in the improvement actions, not limited to realisation of the projects, but also finalised to anchor the projects throughout the organisation	There is clear evidence of involvement of employees in the improvement actions, not limited to realisation of the projects, but also finalised to anchor the projects throughout the organisation, with definition of involvement and roles of different parties in the follow-up	There is strong evidence of involvement of employees in the improvement actions, not limited to realisation of the projects, but also clearly addressed to anchor the projects throughout the organisation, with definition of involvement and roles of different parties, plans for follow-up, deployment, objectives and responsibilities
9.4 Define a consistent approach for monitoring and assessing the improvement actions.	There is no evidence of a defined approach for monitoring and assessing the improvement plan	There is some evidence of monitoring and assessing the improvement plan, but the approach is not clear or consistent	There is evidence of monitoring and assessing the improvement plan, and the approach is defined in a consistent way	There is evidence of monitoring and assessing the improvement plan, in a defined and formalised way, with a clear and consistent approach for the main phases of the activities	There is evidence of monitoring and assessing the improvement plan, in a defined and formalised way, with a clear and consistent approach for all the main phases of the activities, defining the responsibilities and involving the main stakeholders
9.5 Monitor on a regular basis the implementation of the improvement actions.	There is no evidence of monitoring of implementation of the improvement actions	There is some evidence of monitoring of implementation of the improvement actions, but it does not guarantee monitoring of the main phases of the process (main intermediate steps, end of projects, surveys of results)	There is evidence of monitoring of the main phases of the implementation of the improvement actions, end of (main intermediate steps, end of projects, surveys of results etc.)	There is clear evidence of monitoring of all the relevant phases of the implementation of improvement actions, with formal feedback on progress and intermediate and final results	There is strong evidence of monitoring of all the relevant phases of the implementation of improvement actions, involving the main stakeholders and with formal progress and intermediate and final results

Appendix 1.3

Questionnaire on Pillar 3 The TQM Maturity questionnaire



Reference

The questionnaire for TQM Assessment Maturity is based on the eight EFQM® Fundamental Concepts of Excellence as formulated in the Excellence model version 2003. In the context of the CAF External Feedback Procedure, these principles of excellence were translated into four maturity levels adapted to the public sector environment.

Areas of assessment

All eight principles are to be checked by the organisation as a first step, in order to gain an understanding of the TQM maturity within the organisation. During the site visit, two principles – as chosen by the applicant – will be assessed in depth (one of which must either be Result orientation or Customer focus).

Assessment procedure

The evaluation relates to the maturity level achieved by the organisation as a result of the self-assessment and the action plan. The evaluation scale has four levels:

0	= Initiation level has not been achieved
I	= Initiation level
R	= Realisation level
M	= Maturity level

Principle of excellence 1. Result orientation	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
Definition	The initiation level has not been reached	The organisation identifies relevant stakeholders and result areas.	The organisation defines a set of targets and results to be achieved in relation to the relevant stakeholders' needs.	The organisation systematically monitors the results it achieves and uses it for continuous improvement.
Examples		There is a focus on developing a result-oriented culture in the organisation. The organisation has identified the different stakeholders and segmented them into different categories. It has defined relevant result areas linked to the mission of the organisation.	A result-oriented culture is systematically promoted in the organisation. A first systematic assessment of the stakeholders - as well as their current and future needs and expectations - has been carried out. A first set of corresponding targets has been defined for relevant stakeholders in relation to the result areas.	Stakeholders are involved in setting and reviewing results and targets. The organisation has defined result targets for all key processes. These targets are connected with the dimensioning and planning of the assignments. Employees know the targets relating to their work tasks and processes. Management supervises the organisational development in terms of result targets for key processes and finances.

Principle of excellence 2. Citizen/Customer focus	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
Definition	The initiation level has not been reached	The organisation focuses on the needs of existing and potential citizens/customers. Management and employees have a common understanding of who the customers are and which segments the organisation is servicing. Employees understand the demands and expectations defined in legislation and regulation regarding citizen/customer service.	The organisation involves citizens/customers in the evaluation and improvement of its performance. The first systematic measurement of customer satisfaction, expectations and needs has been carried out, and the institution is working on improvements related to this. Management and employees develop and deliver services responding to the needs and expectations of citizens/customers.	The organisation responds to the needs of citizens/customers by developing and delivering activities, products and services. Results from citizen/customer satisfaction measurements and dialogue are used - to review and develop strategies and action plans for the entire organisation; - to respond adequately when things go wrong (e.g. complaints management). Employees have a multi-faceted picture of citizen/customer needs - including additional needs to those that relate directly to key products/services (e.g. transparency, involvement). Both management and employees show concern for current and future customer needs through their behaviour and attitudes.
Examples				

Principle of excellence 3. Leadership and constancy of purpose	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
Definition	The initiation level has not been reached	Leaders establish a clear mission statement.	Leaders establish vision and values. They drive and inspire people towards excellence.	Leaders demonstrate the capability to maintain constancy of purpose in a changing environment.
Examples		Leaders provide the organisation with a well-defined mission according to legislation and regulation requirements, as well as taking into account the stakeholders' expectations.	Leaders provide the organisation with the definition of a mission, vision and values and share it with the people in the organisation. Managers at all levels are focused on bringing the mission, vision and values into practice.	Stakeholders are confident about the constancy of purpose and steadiness of management. Managers are perceived as role models. The quality of management has been measured e.g. through management assessment or job satisfaction measurements.

Principle of excellence 4. Management of processes and facts	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
Definition	The initiation level has not been reached	Processes are identified and managed.	The implementation of the strategy and planning of the organisation is enabled and assured through the processes.	Processes are continuously improved for effectiveness on the basis of internal performance measurement, bench learning and/or benchmarking.
Examples		A process-oriented way of thinking has been initiated within the organisation.	The organisation has completed the identification of all key processes.	The organisation has a detailed view of all processes through an information system (including management, operational and support processes).
		The key processes - linked to the relevant result areas - have been identified.	Key processes have a clear ownership.	All these processes are monitored relating to results and improved on a regular basis.
			Targets for key processes are defined in line with the strategy and planning of the organisation.	People know the processes they are involved in and the targets of these processes.
			The organisation measures results of key processes in relation to the targets.	Procedures are in place to ensure that targets are broken down and results are used for improvements.
			The organisation has defined the basis for an information system to support process management.	

Principle of excellence 5. People development and involvement	0	I = Initiation			R = Realisation		M = Maturity	
		The organisation takes initiatives for developing and involving people.			The organisation develops competencies and involves people in a structured way to improve products, services and processes.		The organisation creates a working environment of shared values and a culture of trust, openness, empowerment and recognition.	
Examples		A training portfolio is present, which takes into account people's demand for further development of the existing competencies.			The organisation identifies and develops the required competencies; thereby preparing people to meet and adapt to changes.		The organisation rewards and recognises people in a way that builds commitment and encourages their loyalty to the organisation.	
		The organisation recognises the importance of involving people in the decision-making process. People are invited to express their opinion on the organisational development.			The organisation: - carries out different kinds of training and competence development; - measures and improves employee satisfaction and motivation; - promotes internal mobility; - involves employees actively in the process of improving products, services and processes.		The organisation: - formulates the human resource policy according to the strategy and planning involving the people; - establishes a regular cycle regarding people development (appraisal, training and dialogue); - involves employees in the development of strategies and action plans, inviting them to generate and implement ideas for improvement.	

Principle of excellence 6. Continuous innovation and improvement	0	I = Initiation			R = Realisation		M = Maturity	
		The organisation learns from its activities and performance and looks for opportunities for improvement.			Continuous improvement is promoted in the organisation, through sharing knowledge and taking into account people's suggestions.		The organisation systematically challenges the status quo, encourages, accepts and integrates innovation and regularly compares its performance to other organisations.	
Examples		There is an assessment of performance in relevant result areas. Management has started a dialogue with other organisations on how they work. Improvements based on internal assessments and external observation have been initiated.			The organisation starts to incorporate the principles of the PDCA cycle when working with improvements. The organisation exchanges experiences with other organisations. The organisation identifies opportunities and obstacles to innovation and learning. Continuous improvement is supported by the people on a regular basis e.g. by carrying out self-assessments. Management encourages employees to take responsibility for improvement actions.		Management acknowledges the significance of strategic renewal and modernisation in order to accommodate future challenges regarding e.g. customer needs, recruitment, maintenance and political demands. The organisation carries out bench-learning, both internally and externally. Projects/efforts are carried out according to the principles of the PDCA cycle. The organisation uses creative methods to carry out concrete improvement initiatives generating added value.	

Principle of excellence 7. Partnership development	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
Definition	The initiation level has not been reached	The organisation identifies its partners.	The organisation formalises partnerships to reach mutual advantages.	The organisation manages partnerships in a win-win situation to enable delivery of enhanced value and to optimise the use of resources.
Examples		Management is aware of the significance of the external relationships and partnerships held by the organisation. The organisation's most important external relationships and partnerships have been identified. The organisation enjoys different kinds of cooperation with external actors.	Management has a clear view of the most important external relationships and partnerships and the development possibilities of these, based on a clearly identified mutual benefit. The organisation is engaged in formalised key partnerships. Employees are aware of the external relationships and partnerships, which are important to their position and tasks.	The organisation ensures systematic partnerships with all significant partners. Regular evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of existing partnerships and their improvement is carried out. The organisation engages in the search for new partners.

Principle of excellence 8. Social responsibility	0	I = Initiation	R = Realisation	M = Maturity
Definition	The initiation level has not been reached	The organisation is aware of its impact on society (social and environmental).	The organisation is actively involved in activities related to social responsibility and ecological sustainability.	The organisation meets or exceeds the major expectations and requirements of the local and - where appropriate - the global community.
Examples		The organisation makes a distinction between its mission and its corporate social responsibility as a public institution. The organisation identifies the areas of impact in terms of social, economic and ecological issues and impact on the media.	The organisation works on mutually beneficial projects on societal issues. The organisation has started to implement initiatives that have an impact on social, economic and ecological issues and on the media.	Management has defined a vision on relevant issues concerning corporate social responsibility, and employees share this vision. The organisation integrates this vision into the strategy and action plans. The organisation promotes opportunities and develops initiatives to work on mutually beneficial projects with society. The organisation has carried out measurements of corporate social responsibility and ecological sustainability in some areas and the results have been discussed.

Appendix 2

The CAF External Feedback Scoring Guide

Background

The purpose of the guide is to act as a guide for the CAF External Feedback Actor with regards to assessing the level of achievement reached in the CAF External Feedback and whether an applicant organisation is qualified to receive the label 'Effective CAF User'.

The scoring guide describes the basic principles for an assessment by the CAF External Feedback Actor and scoring of the organisations working with CAF.

The scope of the assessment comprises three pillars:

- Assessment of the self-assessment process, which covers the first six steps of the ten steps defined in the 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' (not an assessment of the scores given in the self-assessment process).
- Assessment of the planning and the process of improvement, which covers the steps from seven to nine defined in the 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' (not an assessment of the results of the improvement actions).
- Assessment of the TQM maturity of the organisation by examining the maturity level it has attained as a result of the self-assessment and the action plan that is installed. The assessment of maturity with regard to TQM values is based on the eight Principles of Excellence (the broader scope of excellence).

The questionnaires completed by the applicant cover these pillars and serve as the main frame of reference for an assessment by the CAF External Feedback Actor. Each of the pillars will be scored through the appropriate evaluation scale (see further below), and the pillars have specific scoring profiles (profiles which must be met to obtain the label – see further below). The first section on Scoring methodology will outline the basic principles with regard to scoring by the CAF External Feedback Actor.

1. Scoring methodology

The main purpose of the procedure is to serve as a framework for the provision of systematic external feedback to CAF users requiring it. The assessment process and the examination during the site visit must therefore be provided in an open and respectful manner, which supports learning and dialogue. The CAF External Feedback Actor should behave in such a manner that the site visit is not perceived as a one-way gathering of evidence, but as a possibility for discussion and feedback.

The CAF External Feedback must be flexible enough to handle many types of organisations in terms of complexity and size. The actions described in all three pillars, and their correlation to the scores, should therefore not be used as a checklist, but as a guide. In addition to the actions described here, other actions not included may also be appropriate for certain organisations. This means that the scoring should not be perceived as a mechanical exercise, but should be based on both the overall impression of the organisation when the site visit has been concluded, as well as the various evidence gathered with regard to specific steps, actions and changes.

1.1 Evidence

The questionnaires completed by the applicant serve as the main frame of reference for the CAF External Feedback Actor. Evidence gathered at the site visit and through written accounts should determine whether the self-description in the questionnaires gives a correct assessment of the organisations working with CAF. Evidence will be gathered through interviews and workshops with all (internal) relevant stakeholders from the organisation, and through various existing written accounts.

Written documents include self-assessment report(s), improvement plans and other relevant documents.

It is important to stress that ‘evidence’ does not have to be materialised in written form, but can take the form of interviews and opinions of the stakeholders, and a comparison of these statements between the different groups. Secondly, the organisation is not supposed to prepare a lot of new written accounts in the process of the External Feedback scheme; the examination should, where possible, use materials that are already available.

1.2 Scoring

Organisations are scored on the basis of evaluation scales (see part 2 of this scoring guide). A sophisticated scoring tool – such as Radar in the Excellence recognition scheme – has not been developed because the CAF External Feedback scheme is for CAF users who are just starting their journey towards holistic and systematic quality development. At this level, most organisations will not have written accounts that support this more sophisticated type of assessment.

The scheme recognises the ability of an organisation to make an effective and well-planned self-assessment that increases its understanding of the fundamental principles needed to become excellent. A more sophisticated scoring tool at this level would risk shifting the focus from a dialogue between the CAF External Feedback Actor and the organisation regarding important discussions and lessons learned, to a more one-sided gathering of facts to support an assessment.

Scoring of the self-assessment process and improvement actions (Pillars 1-2)

Instead of a scoring tool, some basic principles are available to guide the CAF External Feedback Actor. In order to make the decision as to whether a step should be assessed as acceptable (3) or satisfactory (4), for example, the CAF External Feedback Actor should use the PDCA as a guideline. For each step, the CAF External Feedback Actor considers whether the organisation has planned, developed, checked and adjusted the actions, where reasonable, in an effective way. Important questions could be:

- Has the applicant organisation planned the step effectively and included relevant issues and contingencies?
- Has the step been developed and implemented according to the plan? If not, were changes to the implementation reasonable and based on solid arguments?
- Has the organisation, if appropriate for the step, checked whether the chosen approach has achieved the intended results?

- And finally, did the organisation adjust actions during the process or plans in order to change the approach in the next self-assessment, based on checks and lessons learned?

The PDCA should not be used as a scoring tool, but as a framework for reflection with regard to the planning and implementation of the self-assessment and improvement actions. The CAF External Feedback Actor should therefore not provide a mechanical assessment of the individual activities for all aspects of PDCA (e.g. by judging an otherwise satisfactory activity as merely acceptable just because checks (C) and adjustment (A) are missing). In other words, not all activities will require checks and adjustment, for example, to receive the assessment ‘satisfactory’.

The questionnaires completed by the applicant serve as the main frame of reference for the CAF External Feedback Actor when scoring. The first two pillars (self-assessment process and improvement plan) are scored at the level of the nine steps and not the 35 underlying actions. The CAF External Feedback Actors are thus invited to use the questionnaires as a framework for scoring by giving the individual actions a rating and examining what the ratings add up to on the level of the nine steps (see Part 3 of this scoring guide).

Scoring of TQM values (Pillar 3)

To support the scoring of maturity, the questionnaire provides a range of examples that indicate which possible actions constitute different levels of maturity (see Part 3 of this scoring guide). Again, the examples serve as a guide only and the context and type of organisation can impact which and how many actions are appropriate for reaching different levels of maturity.

To achieve the label of ‘Effective CAF User’, the organisation must reach initiation level in all eight principles of Excellence. It is not possible to discuss all eight principles in depth during the site visit. During the site visit, the CAF External Feedback Actor will focus on the two principles chosen by the organisation for a more in-depth examination and feedback.

The questionnaire on TQM values completed by the applicant serves as the main frame of reference for the CAF External Feedback Actor. In addition to the Pillar 3 document, the CAF External Feedback Actors examine the self-assessment report(s) and the improvement plan(s) in order to make an overall assessment of the level of maturity reached for all eight principles. The aim is to decide whether the report(s) and the improvement plan(s) show that

actions are either in place or under development, making it reasonable to judge that the first level of maturity has been reached. The CAF External Feedback Actors may also include other principles during the site visit interviews if there is any doubt as to which level of maturity the organisation has reached.

2. Evaluation scales

2.1 Evaluation scales for the self-assessment process and the improvement actions (Pillars 1-2)

The self-assessment process and the improvement actions are assessed through the same evaluation scale from 1-5 points: The assessment does not look at the scores generated during the self-assessment (i.e. PDCA-evaluation of actions performed under each sub-criterion in the CAF model), nor does the assessment examine the actual proven results of the improvement actions. What is examined is the way the self-assessment and the improvement process have been planned, developed, checked and adjusted.

1	The activities have been carried out in a very limited way.
2	The activities have been carried out in a limited way.
3	The activities have been carried out in an acceptable way.
4	The activities have been carried out in a satisfying (satisfactory) way.
5	The activities have been carried out in an outstanding way.

All steps in both pillars (steps 1-9) must be assessed by the CAF External Feedback Actor

2.2 Evaluation scales for the TQM values

The assessment of the TQM values relates to the maturity level achieved by the organisation as a result of the work with the self-assessment and the improvement process. The TQM values consist of the eight Principles of Excellence.

The evaluation scale has four levels:

O	= Initiation level has not been achieved
I	= Initiation level
R	= Realisation level
M	= Maturity level

The evaluation of the TQM Maturity determines the extent to which the organisation has succeeded in implementing holistic quality development values through the self assessment and improvement process. The aim is therefore not to assess the real results of the improvement activities and the quality of these, but

to assess whether the self-assessment has changed basic values with regard to quality development in the organisation. The applicant chooses two concepts from the eight Principles of Excellence to be assessed in depth during the site visit (one of which must either be Customer Focus or Result Orientation).

3. Scoring profiles

3.1 Scoring profile for the self-assessment process and the improvement actions (Pillars 1-2)

These scoring profiles cover:

- Assessment of the process of self-assessment which covers the first six of the ten steps as defined in the 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' (not an assessment of the scores given in the self assessment process)
- Assessment of the planning and the process of improvement which covers the steps from seven to nine as defined in the 'Guidelines to improving organisations using CAF' (not an assessment of the results of the improvement actions).

The assessment made by the CAF External Feedback Actor will be based on evidence gathered by interviewing different groups in the workplace and the self-assessment report(s), the improvement plan and other relevant documents. A score from 1 to 5 is given for each of the nine steps globally.

To obtain the label, the minimum requirements are as follows:

- The total overall score of the assessment of Pillars 1 and 2 must be at least 28 points.
- Steps 1, 5 and 9 must be deemed to be at least satisfactory (score of 4) i.e. a minimum score of four must be achieved.

All steps must be assessed by the CAF External Feedback Actor.

The CAF External Feedback Actor can choose to use the questionnaire as a framework for scoring by giving the individual actions a rating and examining whether the actions add up to the score given on the level of the nine steps. The final decision as to whether the organisation obtains the label is based on the scoring profile for the nine steps, not the individual actions.

The scoring profile is marked with grey for steps 1, 5 and 9, where a minimum of 4 is deemed necessary. The score is given for the nine steps (marked with a red border in the questionnaire), not the individual activities of which the step is comprised.

The total overall score for the assessment of the nine steps in Pillars 1 and 2 must be at least 28 points.

Scoring profile Pillar 1	1	2	3	4	5
Step 1: Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).					
Step 2: Communicate the self-assessment project.					
Step 3: Create a self-assessment group(s).					
Step 4: Organise training.					
Step 5: Perform the self-assessment.					
Step 6: Prepare a report describing the results of self-assessment.					
Scoring profile Pillar 2					
Step 7: Draft an improvement plan, based on the accepted self-assessment report.					
Step 8: Communicate the improvement plan.					
Step 9: Implement the improvement plan.					
Minimum score needed (incl. three steps with 4) = 28					

Self-assessment process Pillar 1	1	2	3	4	5
Step 1: Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).					
1.1 Assure the commitment and ownership of the management for launching the process.					
1.2 Assure a clear management decision with regard to carrying out the SA in consultation with the organisation, the scope of the SA (SA covers the whole organisation or only parts/units/ departments....) and the overall objective of the SA					
1.3 Define a framework for the SA process and the subsequent actions, plan the SA activities					
1.4 Appoint an SA process leader with a high level of knowledge of the organisation or constitute an SA Committee headed by the SA process leader					
1.5 Define the scoring panel to be used					
1.6 Allocate resources for SA and define how to prioritise the distribution of resources					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 1:					
Step 2: Communicate the self-assessment project.					
2.1 Define a communication plan, to include the expected benefits, the goal and the activities of SA					
2.2 Implement the communication plan using different tools					
2.3 Communicate to all relevant stakeholders during the different phases of the SA process and stimulate involvement of the top and middle managers, staff and employees in SA					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 2:					
Step 3: Create a self-assessment group(s).					
3.1 Decide whether it is necessary to create one or more SA groups, define their number, create them, choose their chair, assign responsibilities to each member as needed					
3.2 Decide whether the manager(s) should be part of the SA group(s)					
3.3 Select the participants of the SA group(s) on the basis of specified criteria, such as their knowledge of the organisation , their personal skills and their representativeness					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 3:					
Step 4: Organise training.					
4.1 Organise information/training activities for leaders and managers (top and middle) to promote ownership and commitment					
4.2 Prepare a plan for all the training activities of SA group(s)					
4.3 Organise training for the members of the self-assessment group(s)					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 4:					

Step 5: Perform the self-assessment.					
5.1 Relevant documents and information for SA are collected and made available for all the SA groups					
5.2 The members of the SA group(s) compile a list of strengths and areas of improvement and provide a score for each sub-criterion of CAF.					
5.3 The chair collects the individual inputs and prepares the consensus meeting, assuring all conditions for its success					
5.4 The SA group reaches consensus on strengths, areas for improvement and scoring for each sub-criterion.					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 5:					
Step 6: Prepare a report describing the results of self-assessment.					
6.1 Prepare a final report containing at least the following elements for each sub-criterion: - strengths, - areas for improvement and - score					
6.2 Present the final report to the Senior Management of the organisation					
6.3 Communicate the main results to people in the organisation and other relevant stakeholders					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 6:					

Improvement plan (Pillar 2)	1	2	3	4	5
Step 7: Draft an improvement plan, based on the accepted self-assessment report.					
7.1 Collect all proposals for actions for improvement (including the ideas formulated during the SA)					
7.2 Prioritise improvement actions with regards to their effectiveness and feasibility					
7.3 Define a structured action plan for the selected improvement actions based on the PDCA Cycle (Plan-Do-Check-Act)					
7.4 Establish ways to measure the performance of the actions and the results					
7.5 Incorporate the action plan into the normal strategic planning process					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 7:					
Step 8: Communicate the improvement plan.					
8.1 Define a communication plan - the appropriate information with the appropriate media to the appropriate target group, addressed to all stakeholders - for the improvement actions					
8.2 Implement the communication plan					
8.3 Regularly inform the relevant stakeholders– especially the people of the organisation - on the status and progress, including evaluations and experiences					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 8:					
Step 9: Implement the improvement plan.					
9.1 Define clear ownership of the improvement programme and the projects, and ensure transparency in task and responsibility delegation.					
9.2 Implement the improvement plan as scheduled					
9.3 Involve employees in the different improvement actions to ensure anchoring of the improvement projects throughout the institution					
9.4 Define a consistent approach for monitoring and assessing the improvement actions					
9.5 Monitor implementation of the improvement actions on a regular basis					
Self-assessment process - Overall score - Step 9:					

3.2. Scoring profile TQM values (Pillar 3)

These scoring profiles cover:

- Assessment of the TQM maturity of the organisation by examining the maturity level it has attained as a result of the self-assessment and the action plan that is installed. The assessment of maturity with regard to TQM values is based on the eight Principles of Excellence (the broader scope of excellence).
- All of the eight principles will be examined briefly. Two principles chosen by the applicant will be systematically assessed in depth during the site visit (one of which must either be Customer Focus or Result Orientation).

A score signifying the level of TQM maturity (initiation, realisation and maturity) is given for each of the eight Principles of Excellence. To obtain the label, the minimum requirements are as follows:

- All eight principles must reach the level of Initiation (I).

The assessment by the CAF External Feedback Actor will be based on evidence gathered by interviewing different groups in the workplace. The interviews examine whether and to what degree the self-assessment has resulted in positive changes, and the maturity level that has been achieved with regards to the eight Principles of Excellence.

All of the eight Principles of Excellence will be examined briefly. Two concepts chosen by the applicant will be systematically assessed in depth (one of which must either be Customer Focus or Result Orientation).

To support the self-assessment and the examination by the CAF External Feedback Actor of the eight Principles of Excellence, examples describing the level have been included in the questionnaire. The examples should be seen as a guideline for the CAF External Feedback Actor's examination of the eight principles. For a detailed description of the principles, please refer to Appendix 1.3 'The TQM Maturity questionnaire'.

8. Principles of Excellence	Maturity level			
	O	I	R	M
1. Result orientation				
2. Citizen/Customer focus				
3. Leadership and constancy of purpose				
4. Management of processes and facts				
5. People development and involvement				
6. Continuous innovation and improvement				
7. Partnership development				
8. Social responsibility				

Appendix 3

Format of the CAF External Feedback Report



Feedback report Effective CAF User

[Name of organisation]
[Date]

CAF External Feedback Actors
[Name of Actor], [Organisation]
[Name of Actor], [Organisation]

Feedback report

Name of the organisation:	
Address:	
Contact person:	
Telephone:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	
Date:	
Team of CAF External Feedback Actors:	

Section 1: General comments

Main themes in the report

[Insert ½ page describing the main themes in the feedback report].

Identified key strengths

• [Insert 3-4 findings on key strengths].

Key areas of improvement

• [Insert 3-4 findings on key areas of improvement].

Main recommendations

[Insert ½-1 page on main recommendations].

Label has been obtained: ☐

Label has not been obtained: ☐

Section 2: Feedback on the self-assessment process

General comments about the self-assessment process:

Step 1: Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas for improvement • [Insert areas for improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 2: Communicate the self-assessment project.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 3: Create a self-assessment group(s).

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 4: Organise training.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 5: Perform the self-assessment.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 6: Prepare a report describing the results of self-assessment.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Section 3: Feedback on the improvement plan

General comments about the improvement plan:

Step 7: Draft an improvement plan, based on the accepted self-assessment report.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas for improvement • [Insert areas for improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 8: Communicate the improvement plan.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Step 9: Implement the improvement plan.

Strengths • [Insert strengths]

Areas of improvement • [Insert areas of improvement]

The activities have been carried out in a:

very limited way ☐ limited way ☐ acceptable way ☐ satisfying way ☐ outstanding way ☐

Section 4: Feedback on TQM values

General comments about the TQM values:				
[Insert first chosen Principle of Excellence]				
Strengths • [Insert 2-4 strengths]				
Areas of improvement • [Insert 2-4 areas of improvement]				
The organisation:	has not reached the Initiation level ☐	has reached the initiation level ☐	has reached the realisation level ☐	has reached the maturity level ☐

General comments about the TQM values:				
[Insert second chosen Principle of Excellence]				
Strengths • [Insert 2-4 strengths]				
Areas of improvement • [Insert 2-4 areas of improvement]				
The organisation:	has not reached the initiation level ☐	has reached the initiation level ☐	has reached the realisation level ☐	has reached the maturity level ☐

Section 5: Scoring profile

Scoring profile Pillar 1	1	2	3	4	5
Step 1: Decide how to organise and plan the self-assessment (SA).					
Step 2: Communicate the self-assessment project.					
Step 3: Create a self-assessment group(s).					
Step 4: Organise training.					
Step 5: Perform the self-assessment.					
Step 6: Prepare a report describing the results of self-assessment.					
Scoring profile Pillar 2					
Step 7: Draft an improvement plan, based on the accepted self-assessment report.					
Step 8: Communicate the improvement plan.					
Step 9: Implement the improvement plan.					
Minimum score needed (incl. three steps with 4) = 28	Score = [Insert score]				

8. Principles of Excellence	Maturity level			
	O	I	R	M
1. Result orientation				
2. Citizen/Customer focus				
3. Leadership and constancy of purpose				
4. Management by processes and facts				
5. People development and involvement				
6. Continuous innovation and improvement				
7. Partnership development				
8. Social responsibility				
All eight principles must reach at least Initiation level (I)				

Label has been obtained: ☐	Label has not been obtained: ☐
---	---

Appendix 4

Form for Applicant Organisation

Contact details

Applicant

Name of the organisation:	
Address:	
Contact person:	
Telephone:	
Fax:	
E-mail:	
Date:	

The CAF has been applied in 20__ (year)

- ☐ CAF has been implemented in the organisation as a whole
- ☐ CAF has been implemented in part of the organisation, namely: _____

The CAF self-assessment report was concluded and delivered to the management of the organisation on _____
(dd/mm/yyyy)

Please note that the application should be completed between 6 and 12 months after the CAF self-assessment has taken place and the self-assessment report has been concluded and delivered.

☐ Registration as a CAF User

The organisation (or department) is registered as a CAF User in the European online database of CAF Users (caf.eipa.eu)

Signature by the management of the organisation (e.g. General Director)

Name: _____ Title: _____

Place: _____ Date: _____

Signature:

This signature confirms that the information provided is correct and that you agree to the conditions for applying.

The application must be sent to:

[Address of the CAF National Organiser]

Appendix 5

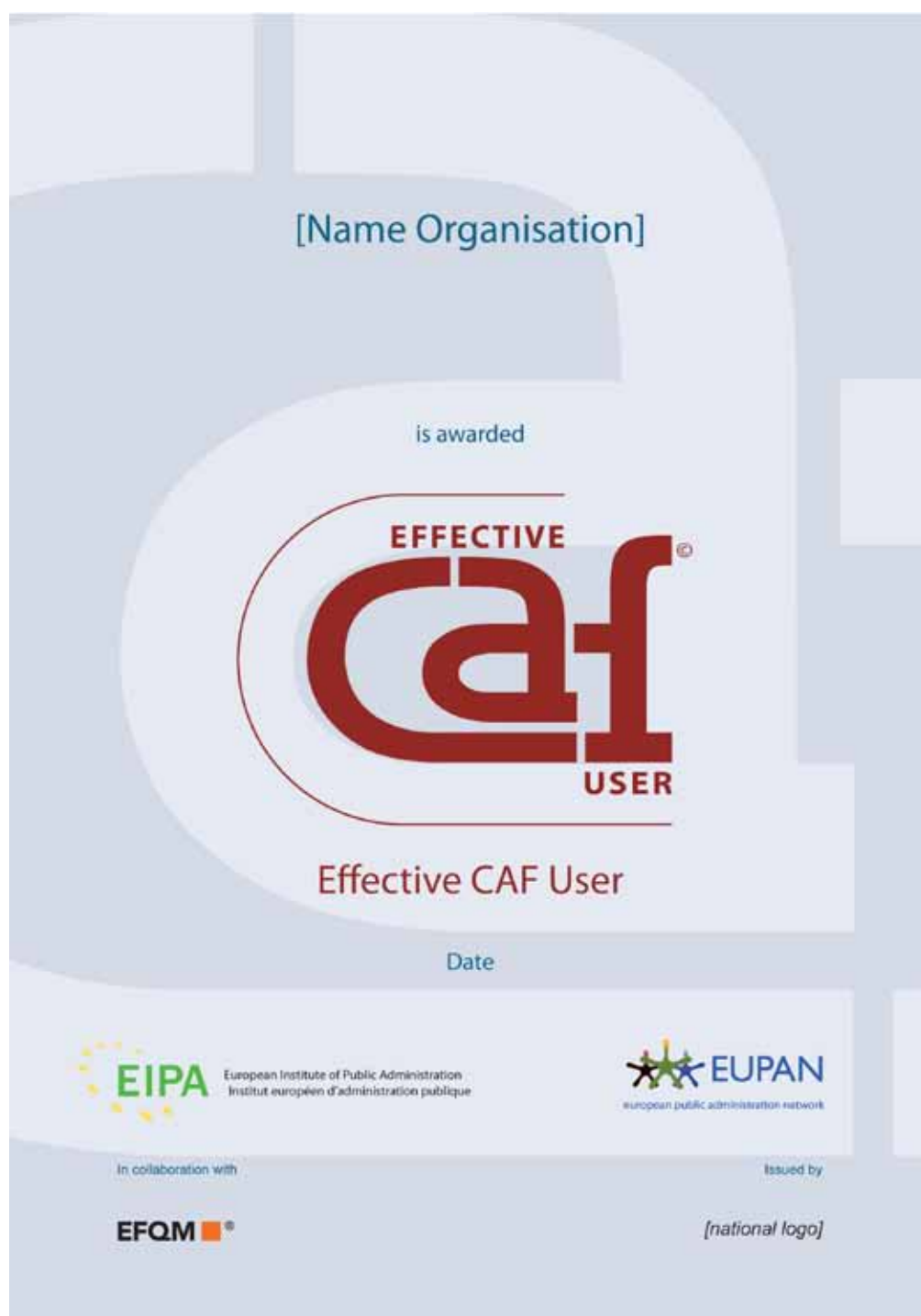
National Organiser Fact sheet

Name	Name of National Organiser in the Member State
Logo	Logo used by the National Organiser
Person responsible	Person responsible within the organisation
Address	Full postal address
E-mail	E-mail address
URL	URL address
Phone	
Fax	

The fact sheets of the Member States will be published on the CAF website (www.eipa.eu/caf).

Appendix 6

Effective CAF User label example





The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a result of the co-operation among the EU Ministers responsible for Public Administration.

The CAF is offered as a common tool to assist public sector organisations to use quality management techniques in public administration. It provides a general, simple, easy-to-use framework, which is suitable for a self-assessment of public sector organisations and their development towards Excellence!

European CAF Resource Centre

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