



Globe of Honour 2023

Chief Adjudicator's Report

Globe of Honour 2023

Chief Adjudicator's Report

In 2023, 11 submissions were received for the Globe of Honour awards and 9 (82%) of these were adjudged to have reached the pass standard.

There is no quota of Globes to be awarded and nor will there be in future years. If every applicant meets the minimum criteria, every applicant will be awarded a Globe of Honour.

General Comments

A maximum of 60 marks are available for the written aspect of the Globe of Honour application. Applicants must score a minimum of 45 marks to remain eligible with a minimum of two individual responses being scored within the top mark band (11-15 marks). Submissions become ineligible for a Globe of Honour should any individual responses be scored within the lower mark band (0-5 marks).

With the pass standard set high (45 out of 60), it is important to score well on each question. One or two weak answers will put the pass standard out of reach. As in previous years, the highest-scoring applicants answered all aspects of each question and adhered closely to the marking scheme, and it was evident that the advice to read the prior year's Chief Adjudicator's Report had been taken. This allowed them to give a much more complete answer and so access the top mark band for each question. Notwithstanding this improvement applicants are again reminded to read the Chief Adjudicator's Report from the previous year prior to completing the application as this report provides helpful insight, comments, and direction on what is required when completing the application; the webinar hosted earlier this year and available online is another helpful guide. Whilst not wishing to be overly critical the Chief Adjudicator feels it incumbent to make the strong point that more care should be taken when completing these applications – The Globe of Honour recognises **excellence** in environmental management and when applicants do not answer the question fully or provide a less than complete answer the implication is that they are not showing due deference to this scheme and consequently this is a disservice to the environmental management profession.

In addition, applicants are reminded that the mark scheme is made available to applicants for reference when completing their application; this mark scheme should be considered throughout the application process. The Chief Adjudicator is of the belief that these documents are often neglected by some of the lower-scoring applicants - something which needlessly risks their achievement of the award, **this was especially evident this year as the marking scheme called for a number of examples in each question and only the highest scoring applicants actioned this.**

The highest-scoring applicants adhered to the requirement that responses to each question must not exceed 750 words (i.e., 3,000 words overall per submission) and provided clear, succinct, and well-structured answers supported with examples where required.

The Globe of Honour assessment methodology is now more closely linked to the Five Star Environmental Audit Report and its findings. Despite it being an **explicit** requirement of both the questions and marking scheme, it was regrettable that a significant proportion of applicants, notably higher than previous years, failed to develop responses incorporating a clear link to the Audit findings; the statement ***'With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Audit:'***, prefixing each individual question, was inconsistently observed by the applicants to these awards and it was notable that only the strongest submissions maintained this important link throughout. **This is a key component of the question and failing to address it is a limiting factor as the Globe of Honour has a direct relationship with the Five Star Environmental Audit.**

There were a large number of high quality, well written and well-structured submissions. It was obvious that a considerable amount of preparation, thought, time and effort had been put into these submissions for which the applicants concerned are to be commended, the use of examples to support the answer and illustrate the point was evident this year and the adjudicating team commented on how helpful this was and that it provided for a more complete and engaging answer. Whilst some submissions did fall short of the standard required for a Globe of Honour, it should be acknowledged that these organisations nonetheless have excellent environmental management systems as recognised by their rating in the audit.

Main Business Activities

Whilst marks are not awarded for this section, it is important that applicants clearly describe the main business activities, the personnel involved and the most significant environmental risks and issues. Indeed, this section underpins the whole application as it helps to put the rest of the submission into context and provides the adjudicator with a valuable insight into the organisation, its operation and risk profile. Most applicants this year provided a comprehensive summary of the main business activities, employee profile, key risks, and operational aspects. However, some did not adequately set out the most significant environmental risks or issues.

Q1: With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Audit:

For three of the audit outcomes, provide a simplified cost/benefit analysis of planned programmes to improve environmental sustainability performance.

This question gave applicants a great deal of scope as they could choose the three audit outcomes to analyse. The high scoring applicants identified and answered for ‘three of the audit outcomes’ as required by the question stem – with their response being supported by a wide range of relevant indirect and direct cost/benefits related to each. They also went on to discuss the resulting programmes and how these would address the selected audit outcomes; their response included detailed quantified indirect and direct cost/benefits analysis for all the three planned programmes.

Weaker scoring applicants firstly either failed to identify any or only identified one/two – not the required three audit outcomes and then proceeded to give purely a cost list and not cost/benefit analysis. Neither did they explore programmes, outcomes, or measures. Given that environmental management professionals often partner with senior management/leaders this business skill of financial argument and persuasion is a key competence that should be developed.

Q2: With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Audit:

Describe how your organisation will use innovation (e.g. research, technology, tools & equipment, training, management information/data etc.) in future plans/programmes to improve environmental sustainability performance.

This question was intentionally crafted to give applicants a range of reference points to use (e.g., research, technology, tools & equipment, training, management information/data etc.) to supplement their answers. Applicants were asked to describe their approach for implementing improvements identified as part of the audit process, focusing on how these improvement opportunities would be used to improve performance.

Less proficient applicants often simply listed ideas of activities than providing the description asked for and did not consider a range of innovation tools. They also tended to focus exclusively on the activity and not the engagement element.

In contrast, the highest-scoring applicants presented compelling evidence of their grasp of a multifaceted approach that hinged on technology, tools, and innovation. They recognised that success relied on various dimensions, including idea generation, development, process improvement, optimisation and how leveraging technology and innovative tools led to competitive advantage.

This question offered candidates the potential to achieve high marks whilst showcasing their approach to innovation – provided they adhered to the marking scheme and presented a robust methodology. Only the highest-scoring candidates provided comprehensive answers, identifying the approach, process and plans used, ensuring comprehensive coverage of environmental and operational considerations, tailoring responses to the organisation's unique context, avoiding generic responses, and demonstrating breadth in their answers.

Furthermore, the top-performing candidates went beyond the prescribed points, expanding their responses to encompass the broader business advantages achievable through the effective implementation of environmental, technology, tools, and innovation. This approach not only enhances performance but also drives operational efficiency and overall organisational excellence.

In summary, this question offered applicants an opportunity to showcase their ability to develop and articulate an implementation strategy for identified improvements, with a particular focus on technology, tools, and innovation. Success was achieved by those who not only adhered to the marking scheme but also demonstrated a deep understanding of the multifaceted nature of the approach and its broader organisational implications, including the potential for technological and innovative advancements.

As noted in the introduction only the highest scoring applicants provided the requisite number of examples required by each question.

Q3: *With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Audit: Describe how the senior management team lead and manage so as to improve the environmental sustainability performance of the organisation.*

This question aimed to provide applicants with a further opportunity to showcase their comprehension of the pivotal role that senior-level leadership and sponsorship play in shaping behaviours within the organisation and its wider stakeholder and supply chain networks. It is

widely acknowledged that participation, communication, engagement, and collaboration are fundamental aspects when striving to enhance a strong environmentally aware culture. Consequently, this question aimed to delve into the significance of workplace environmental management as an intrinsic and inseparable component of the organisation, not merely as a detachable "add-on" as might be perceived by some.

The central objective of this question was to explore the depth of commitment exhibited by senior management towards workplace environmental management as a foundational element of the organisation. Weaker applicants often provided a mere listing of activities undertaken by senior management, such as site visits or sending letters to suppliers/employees. While these efforts are commendable, they fell short of the level of detail expected in an application of this nature. More importantly, they failed to demonstrate an understanding that the actions and activities of top management play a pivotal role in the continual improvement of the organisation's environmental management standards and performance. The crux of the question lies in governance, oversight, and active leadership, and only the highest-scoring applicants were able to identify and discuss these critical components.

The most outstanding applicants illustrated the intricate interdependence between workplace environmental management and the organisation's ability to achieve its overarching objectives. They grasped the concept that businesses committed to the environment, where workplace environmental management and environmental safety is viewed as integral to operations, tend to be more advanced in terms of performance, culture, and reputation. As stipulated by the marking scheme, their responses were substantiated with thorough explanations and the requisite number of examples. Furthermore, they elaborated on how senior management had demonstrated their personal commitment throughout the process. This included senior management's involvement in formulating objectives, identifying resource requirements (financial, human, material), and actively supporting the integration of these objectives into the business—a manifestation of "walking the talk." And a demonstration of both leading and managing.

The highest-scoring applicants provided concrete examples of how workplace environmental management objectives were directly aligned with operational objectives, and vice versa. They frequently cited the corporate balanced scorecard principle as an illustrative example of this alignment. Additionally, they pointed out how individual workplace environmental management objectives were used in performance management practices.

In contrast, weaker applicants failed to convey an understanding of the intricate link between objectives, resource allocation, and commitment as integral components of cultivating a high-performing environmental culture. They overlooked the symbiotic relationship that exists within the organisation and with its stakeholder base.

This question was a strong differentiator with only the highest performing applicants overall scoring well on this question and observing the ‘and’ element in the question stem requiring both parts be answered. I would again encourage applicants to refer to the mark scheme to enable them to fully answer the question. As noted in the General Comments section on page two, that only the highest scoring applicants provided the requisite number of examples required by each question.

Q4: With relevant reference to the outcomes from your recent Five Star Audit: Explain how you intend to use the output of the recent Five Star Environmental Sustainability Audit to improve environmental sustainability performance and associated culture.

This question was designed to delve into the strategy for implementing improvements identified during the audit process, essentially focusing on the what (process/method) and the how (culture and engagement) and how these improvement opportunities would be effectively put into action at a specific site to drive continuous improvement.

Less adept applicants tended to adopt a hierarchical or ‘top-down’ approach - a command-and-control style—essentially relying on directives from central management to effect improvements. While this approach may yield results in certain organisational contexts, it is inherently unsustainable and has been empirically proven to be ineffective in the long-term enhancement of environmental performance and cultural improvement.

In contrast, the highest-scoring applicants presented compelling evidence (and also provided the requisite number of examples) of their nuanced understanding that the approach to implementation is multifaceted. They recognised that success hinged on various facets, including policy formulation, process optimisation, personnel engagement, performance evaluation, and the pivotal roles played by leadership, management, and organisational culture in the realisation of objectives. They delved into both quantitative and qualitative measures, demonstrating a clear connection to the preceding question, and illustrating how improvement opportunities could be seamlessly integrated into future plans, targets, and objectives.

This question was inherently subjective, offering the potential for candidates to secure high marks. However, success was contingent upon adherence to the marking scheme and the provision of a robust methodology. The marking scheme explicitly called for responses supported by justifiable methodologies and relevant examples. Only the top-performing applicants comprehensively addressed the question, identifying the processes used, adequately covering the spectrum of environmental management considerations, ensuring site specificity, avoiding generic responses, and demonstrating sufficient breadth in their answers.

Moreover, the highest-scoring applicants ventured beyond the prescribed points and expanded their responses to incorporate broader business advantages attainable through the effective implementation of environmental objectives.

This question was again an opportunity for candidates to showcase their ability to develop and articulate an implementation strategy for identified improvements. Success was achieved by those who not only followed the marking scheme but also demonstrated a deep understanding of the multifaceted nature of the approach and its broader organisational implications.

The highest scoring applicants addressed the points above but developed their answer further to incorporate broader business benefits that could be achieved by implementing environmental objectives well. As with the previous question only the highest scoring applicants answered both elements of the question noting the 'and' in the question stem.

I stress again, as noted in the General Comments section on page two, that only the highest scoring applicants provided the requisite number of examples required by each question.