



AIMS OF AQOS MENTORING

Achieving Quality Scotland is an overall improvement framework which supports services to ensure that quality management systems and practice improvement is in place - an award is recognition that these are successfully implemented within a service. The mentoring sessions' main focus is to support services develop such systems, procedures and develop practice should they not exist. Services are given specific tasks to undertake & document in the service between mentoring sessions, as well as working through the quality areas themselves.

SOSCN brings national perspectives and is able to share experiences from across Scotland. From SOSCN's perspective mentoring sessions are not compulsory.

SOSCN would like to highlight the following about the mentoring process:

- The content of the AQOS mentoring is determined by SOSCN and related fully to the key concepts, principles and ideas within AQOS including the process of self-evaluation and producing relevant evidence to meet our standards.
- Evidence for the portfolio needs to demonstrate that staff and management are not only aware of the key concepts, principles and ideas but that these are implemented and integrated into the daily operation of the service.
- Our training is intended to be challenging and encourage greater reflection on practice.
- Through group activities, the mentoring provides attendees with a forum to share concerns and ideas, reflect on practice and discuss a variety of topics.
- AQOS is about continuous quality improvement and even “excellent” graded services have said that they have benefited from the mentoring- services do not remain static as children and situations are constantly changing.
- The mentoring programme is standardized for delivery across the country, however, we take into account particular queries from services, and SOSCN can also be directly contacted between mentoring sessions.
- AQOS mentoring training is not compulsory in terms of SOSCN's terms and conditions i.e. portfolios submitted by the two year deadline will be assessed whether the service has undertaken mentoring or not. However, to date, most services submitting have received some mentoring.
- SOSCN discusses how to create a portfolio briefly at the outset, provide an examples of completed portfolios and the later or last sessions are almost completely about portfolio building, however, AQOS is not about gathering the evidence alone but about attitude and commitment to the process. There is also information about gathering evidence in the introduction to the workbook. We also recommend that services do not start the referencing process until they are fully satisfied that sufficient and appropriate evidence has been gathered for all quality indicators.
- Most of the evidence which is asked for should have an additional purpose and not be created solely for the purposes of the portfolio, e.g. we ask to see what activities/play opportunities a service provides- this is something which services should be showing

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parents, other professionals, so we ask how services could do this as well as providing suggestions.

- We recommend that services first complete the preparatory section as this cross-referenced material constitutes much of the evidence for AQS; in particular QAs 8 & 9 are nearly solely evidenced through the preparatory section.

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