

Higher Ratings Awards

How does an approved provider apply for a higher ratings award?

To apply for either Commendable or Accreditation with Merit, the approved provider is required to provide a written submission **at the same time** as making the application for accreditation.

There are two higher ratings awards:

- Commendable
- Accreditation with Merit

These higher ratings awards apply across the service, rather than for specific expected outcomes.

Only the truly exceptional homes attain commendable.

Approved providers that assess their service as compliant with all 44 Expected Outcomes and as having sustainable continuous improvement systems may wish to apply for these higher ratings awards. A submission for a higher award must be made at the same time as the application for accreditation.

Accreditation with Merit — recognises services that have delivered consistently across the whole of the service, with mature continuous improvement systems and with evidence of superior results in some areas for residents, beyond those necessary to achieve accreditation.

Commendable — recognises services that are truly exceptional. They will have mature continuous improvement systems and can demonstrate the delivery of exceptional results for residents, beyond those necessary for the achievement of a Merit award.

Homes that achieve either of these ratings will have a summary of their achievements published on the Agency's web site.

The submission for a higher ratings award includes the following parts:

- **Part 1: Approved provider declaration and indication of Higher Ratings Award level**
- **Part 2: The summary**
- **Part 3: Detailed information, plus appendices**

The written submission must have sufficient information and verifiable sources of evidence for an assessment team to evaluate it at a desk audit. The submission proceeds to the stage of checking at a site visit only after successful evaluation at desk audit.

Submissions must be received on the same date as the service's application for accreditation, in order to be considered.

Whether submitting a hardcopy or electronic submission, the submission must be set out in 12-point size Arial text, with 2.5cm margins.

A valid submission for higher ratings award is one that:

- is made by the approved provider
- uses the approved Agency submission format, has all parts completed, includes all attachments and meets all size and set out limitations
- has sufficient information and verifiable sources of evidence to proceed past desk assessment
- includes the agreement by the approved provider that the Agency may publish information about the service's achievements
- is submitted at the same time as the application for accreditation for the service.

What information must be included in the submission?

There are three parts as described below.

Part 1 – Approved Provider Declaration – Higher Ratings Award

This is a form completed and signed by approved provider. A copy of this form is reproduced here.

Approved Provider Declaration – Higher Ratings Award

<p>ACSA Submission for Higher Ratings Award</p>	<p>RACS ID: <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Service Name: <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p>			
<p>Part 1: Approved Provider Declaration – Higher Ratings Award</p>			
<p>Indication of Award Level</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Commendable</p> <p>A higher rating award recognising services that are truly exceptional. They will have mature continuous improvement systems and can demonstrate the delivery of exceptional results for residents, beyond those necessary to achieve Accreditation with Merit.</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center; vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <p>Accreditation with Merit</p> <p>A higher ratings award recognising services that have sustainable continuous improvement systems and can demonstrate the achievement of benefits for residents, beyond those necessary to achieve accreditation.</p> </td> </tr> </table> <p>Refer to appendix 7 of the <i>Guide</i> for the criteria for the Higher Award Ratings.</p> <p>Please indicate if you are applying for Commendable or Accreditation with Merit. Tick one box only:</p> <p>Commendable <input type="checkbox"/> Accreditation with Merit <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If the submission is deemed eligible I agree to the service undergoing a site visit to validate the submission.</p> <p>I understand that no discussion as to the level of recognition will be entered into prior to the official announcement.</p> <p>I agree that should the submission be successful in achieving Higher Rating Award status, the service will be prepared to share its achievements with the industry.</p> <p>Signature of approved provider delegate:</p> <p>Name (please print)</p> <p>Position</p> <p>Date:</p>		<p>Commendable</p> <p>A higher rating award recognising services that are truly exceptional. They will have mature continuous improvement systems and can demonstrate the delivery of exceptional results for residents, beyond those necessary to achieve Accreditation with Merit.</p>	<p>Accreditation with Merit</p> <p>A higher ratings award recognising services that have sustainable continuous improvement systems and can demonstrate the achievement of benefits for residents, beyond those necessary to achieve accreditation.</p>
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Part 2 – The summary

Note: The summary may be used by the Agency to disseminate information about the service to the industry and may be published as part of the accreditation decision.

The summary must be no more than two A4 pages in length. It must provide an overall picture of why the service is worthy of recognition for a higher rating. It must include:

- the service's broad strategies
- how the service involves residents and representatives in the development of services
- how the service involves staff in the improvements
- the service's key measures
- summary of major achievements resulting from the service's plans and actions
- summary of major issues faced by the service and how it has planned for, and addressed these
- how the service goes about identifying the major issues
- what makes the service's management system an overall sustainable system.

The summary provides the Agency with an overview of the service's claims and how the service works.

The approved provider must show, clearly and succinctly, why the service should be awarded the higher rating that has been applied for.

Part 3 – Detailed submission, plus appendices

The detailed submission must address the criteria set out below and be no more than twelve A4 pages in length. The approved provider must be clear in describing the service's results, and ensure that the evidence presented is clear.

Evidence should also be provided to validate the submission. Organising and referencing evidence is part of making the submission. To assist in providing evidence, appendices should be used where necessary. These should be clearly indexed and cross-referenced.

To be eligible for a higher rating, the service will have demonstrated an effective self-assessment process that helps identify where it should best direct its improvement efforts.

Criteria for a Higher Rating Award

Criteria 1

Responsiveness to the needs and rights of residents:

Residents and relatives are involved in the development and review of services that they have determined are important to them.

Accreditation with Merit

- 1(a). The service regularly:
- consults residents and their representatives about what is important to residents in the service.
 - collects information from residents and their representatives for use by staff and managers.
 - gives feedback to residents and relatives about how the service has used their input for the development and assessment of services.
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1(b). Feedback from residents shows resident satisfaction with the effectiveness of some improvements that have been implemented.

1(c). Information from residents and representatives is sometimes taken into account for strategic planning of resident services.

1(d). The use of this information achieves positive results in some Accreditation Standards, beyond compliance.

Accreditation with Commendable

1(a). As for Merit

1(b). Feedback from residents shows resident satisfaction with the effectiveness of many improvements that have been implemented.

1(c). Information from residents is consistently used for strategic planning of resident services.

1(d). The use of this information achieves positive results in all Accreditation Standards, beyond compliance.

Criteria 2

Leadership through planning, implementation and review:

The service uses a system to develop, implement and review the service's vision, values, philosophy, objectives and commitment to quality.

Accreditation with Merit

2(a). The service regularly collects information from staff and residents and uses it in the development of its vision, mission, values, and objectives.

2(b). The service can show how the mission, vision, values and objectives are clearly reflected in the policies, procedures and culture of the service.

Accreditation with Commendable

2(a). As for Merit

2(b). As for Merit

2(c). The service turns its strategic directions into plans that are acted upon.	2(c). As for Merit
2(d). The plans are evaluated with the involvement of staff and residents.	2(d). As for Merit
2(e). The use of the service's strategic planning process achieves positive results in some Accreditation Standards, beyond compliance.	2(e). The use of the service's strategic planning process achieves positive results in all Accreditation Standards, beyond compliance.
	2(f). The service learns from the unintended consequences of the improvements that it introduces, as well as the successes.
	2(g). The service has shared its achievements and improvements with the industry and has well developed and committed plans for future sharing activities.

Criteria 3

Use of data and information:

There is a system in place to use data and information across the four Accreditation Standards to improve the service for residents, beyond the requirements for accreditation.

Accreditation with Merit	Accreditation with Commendable
3(a). The service has identified key performance measures	3(a). As for Merit
3(b). The service uses the data and information collected to measure the effectiveness of improvements introduced.	3(b). The service uses the data and information it collects to inform the decision making: about its approach, and setting strategic directions
3(c). The service reviews and evaluates its performance measures.	3(c). As for Merit
3(d). The use of this data and information achieves positive results for residents in some Accreditation Standards, beyond the requirements for accreditation.	3(d). The use of this data and information achieves positive results for residents in all Accreditation Standards, beyond the requirements for accreditation.
3(e). There is a process to ensure all improvement activities have measures or indicators of success.	3(e). As for Merit
3(f). There is an established evaluation process for all improvement activities .	3(f). As for Merit

Criteria 4

Continuous Improvement:

There is a sustainable continuous improvement system that improves processes and systems for the benefit of residents.

Accreditation with Merit

4(a). There is a sustainable system for identifying where improvements should be targeted, and for prioritising improvement activities, demonstrated over a number of cycles for two years.

4(b). Staff and management understand, and are educated in, continuous improvement.

4(c). Results of improvements are used to change processes and systems for the benefits of the residents.

4(d). The use of the continuous improvement system achieves positive results for residents in some Accreditation Standards, beyond the requirements for accreditation.

Accreditation with Commendable

4(a). There is a sustainable system for identifying where improvements should be targeted, and for prioritising improvement activities, demonstrated over a number of cycles for three years.

4(b). As for Merit

4(c). As for Merit

4(d). The use of the continuous improvement system achieves positive results for residents in **all** Accreditation Standards, beyond the requirements for accreditation.

Criteria 5

Innovation:

There is a sustainable system across the service that captures new or different ideas and translates these ideas into practices with improved results for residents.

Accreditation with Merit

5(a). The service uses a process to capture new or different ideas, from stakeholders and through learning approaches.

5(b). The service uses a planned approach to generating and developing innovative ideas, including the involvement of a range of staff and stakeholders

5(c). The service has implemented and evaluated **at least one** innovation in its service delivery for residents.

Accreditation with Commendable

5(a). As for Merit

5(b). As for Merit

5(c). The service has implemented and evaluated **a number of major** innovations in its service delivery for residents.

5(d). There are processes to capture innovative ideas from other industries

and there are examples of how these have been incorporated into service planning and delivery.

Criteria 6

Benchmarking in relation to Accreditation Standards:

The service uses a process to compare some of its processes and results with other organisations to generate ideas for improvements, preferably improvements of a major or breakthrough nature

Accreditation with Merit

Not applicable

Accreditation with Commendable

6(a). Benchmarking policies and procedures are developed and include the involvement of a range of staff.

6(b). The service has undertaken process benchmarking within residential aged care and/or with other industries.

6(c). The service has used information from its benchmarking activities to implement improvements.

6(d). The service will describe benchmarking activities that it has been involved in during the year prior to submission. This will demonstrate one cycle of choosing a process that is important to residents to benchmark; finding suitable partners, conducting comparisons, analysing the findings and implementing the findings.

6(e). Future benchmarking activities are planned for.

What if the approved provider has applied for a higher ratings award?

If the approved provider has applied for **Commendable** or Accreditation with **Merit** for a service, then it must pass all of the following:

- it must not be in breach of any obligations under the *Act* notified to the Agency by the Department of Health and Ageing; and
- the assessment must verify at site audit
 - compliance with all 44 Expected Outcomes
 - sustainable continuous improvement, with a demonstrated cycle of regular results, review and evaluation
 - the facts presented in the submission.

What is the process for awarding higher ratings?

The process for considering Commendable and Accreditation with Merit ratings is set out in Figure 4.

Figure 4 Higher ratings award process

