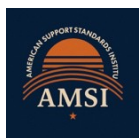


Work / Service Quality

AMSI STANDARD WSQ1

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Introduction

Purpose and Scope

The *Work (Service) Quality Standard (WSQ1)* provides a structured approach to defining, measuring, and improving service/work quality. It ensures that quality is measurable, using a system of quality factors, indicators, probes, and objectives that guide assessment and continuous improvement.

WSQ1 applies to any work or service where consumer-provider agreements define expectations. It is particularly relevant in sectors such as vocational rehabilitation, social services, healthcare, and employment support.

Definitions

- **Consumer** – The recipient of the work or service.
- **Service Provider** – The entity or individual delivering the work or service.
- **Quality Factor** – A fundamental attribute defining service/work quality.
- **Quality Indicator** – A measurable characteristic of a quality factor.
- **Probe** – A data point used to measure a quality indicator.
- **Quality Objective** – A predefined target for an indicator's performance.
- **Quality Scale** – A structured system for evaluating whether objectives are met.
- **Quality Assessment** – The process of evaluating service/work quality based on probes.

Clarifying the Concept of Quality

In accordance with internationally recognized standards (e.g., ISO 9000), **quality is defined as “the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirements.”**

This definition highlights two essential components:

1. The **inherent characteristics** of a service, work, or product (such as timeliness, accessibility, clarity, or professionalism).
2. A **comparison base**, which includes defined or implied **requirements or expectations** that serve as the benchmark.

Thus, quality is not determined by characteristics alone; it is established through the **degree to which these characteristics meet the agreed-upon expectations or objectives**.

In WSQ1, this dual structure is operationalized through:

– **Quality Factors**, which define essential characteristics of service/work quality,

- **Indicators and Probes**, which are used in the process of measuring those characteristics,
- And **Quality Objectives**, which define what level of performance is expected or required.

This framework ensures that quality is **not assumed** but is instead **co-defined, measured, and improved** through ongoing collaboration between consumers and service providers.

Note on Conformity Assessment

This standard aligns with the concept of **conformity assessment**, defined as:

“Any activity concerned with determining directly or indirectly that relevant requirements (expectations) are fulfilled.”

A requirement (or expectation) may originate from a **statutory or regulatory body** (e.g., OPWDD, CDC), an **accreditation agency** (e.g., CQL), a **service framework** (e.g., SEMP), or from **key stakeholders**, including **the consumer, employer, individual with IDD, or job coach**.

WSQ1 provides the structure and tools to carry out this assessment in a consistent and transparent manner.

1. Quality Framework for Work (Service) Quality

1.1 Concept of Quality as a Shared Responsibility

Work (service) quality is a shared responsibility between the consumer and the service provider. It requires mutual understanding and explicit agreement on expectations (quality factors with quality indicators and quality objectives), methods for measurement, and actions for improvement.

1.2 Structure of Quality Assessment

The quality assessment process in WSQ1 is built on a four-part structure:

- **Quality Factors** – Core attributes that define the expected quality of service or work.
- **Quality Indicators** – Criteria to evaluate how each factor performs.
- **Probes** – Data points used during the measurement process.

- **Quality Objectives** – Benchmarks to determine whether performance is acceptable.
-

2. Quality Factors

2.1 Definition and Assignment

Quality factors represent the core dimensions of quality that stakeholders agree are essential. They are defined collaboratively between the consumer and the service provider and serve as the foundation for quality evaluation.

2.2 Categories of Quality Factors

Quality factors may be grouped into the following categories:

- **Performance-Based Factors** – Such as accuracy, timeliness, efficiency, and effectiveness.
 - **Consumer Experience Factors** – Including satisfaction, accessibility, personalization, and responsiveness.
 - **Compliance and Regulatory Factors** – Covering safety standards, legal obligations, and contractual requirements.
 - **Relationship and Communication Factors** – Addressing professionalism, clarity, empathy, and adaptability.
-

3. Quality Indicators and Probes

3.1 Relationship Between Indicators and Probes

Each quality factor is assessed using one or more **quality indicators**, which are specific measurable aspects of the factor. These indicators are evaluated through **probes**, which provide the data required for measurement.

3.2 Assigning Quality Indicators

Quality indicators should be:

- **Clear** – Defined in specific, understandable terms.
- **Measurable** – Supported by data sources that yield quantifiable results.
- **Actionable** – Providing information that can be used to guide service improvement.

3.3 Measuring Quality Indicators Using Probes

Probes are the operational tools for capturing quality data. They must be:

- **Standardized** – Collected using consistent procedures.
 - **Quantifiable** – Based on objective, numerical, or categorical data.
 - **Repeatable** – Reliable over time and across different observers or contexts.
-

4. Quality Objectives and Assessment Methods

4.1 Establishing Quality Objectives

For each quality indicator, corresponding **quality objectives** define the acceptable or target level of performance. These objectives translate expectations into measurable benchmarks.

Quality objectives should be:

- **Specific** – Clearly describing the intended result.
- **Measurable** – Expressed in quantifiable terms.
- **Achievable** – Based on practical service or work conditions.

4.2 Quality Assessment Process

The WSQ1 assessment process follows these steps:

1. **Define Quality Factors** – Identify dimensions of service/work quality.
2. **Assign Quality Indicators** – Establish measurable criteria aligned with each factor.
3. **Set Quality Objectives** – Define target values for each indicator.
4. **Collect Probes** – Gather data to assess indicator performance.
5. **Compare to Objectives** – Determine if expectations are met.

This structured process enables transparent and consistent evaluation of performance.

5. Consumer-Provider Agreement on Quality

5.1 Importance of the Agreement

A **Consumer-Provider Agreement on Quality** formalizes shared expectations and commitments. It promotes transparency, accountability, and ongoing collaboration.

5.2 Structuring the Agreement

A standard quality agreement should include:

- **Basic Information** – Names of the consumer and provider, service description, and effective date.
- **Defined Quality Elements** – List of quality factors, indicators, probes, and objectives.
- **Review Frequency** – Agreed timeline for reassessing objectives and updating the agreement.

This agreement supports ongoing dialogue and continuous quality improvement.

6. Quality Scales and Evaluation

6.1 Types of Quality Scales

To ensure that performance data is meaningfully interpreted, WSQ1 supports several types of quality scales:

- **Binary Scale (Pass/Fail)** – Determines whether the quality objectives were met or not. Suitable for clear-cut requirements such as compliance or safety.
- **Percentage Scale** – Calculates the proportion of successful probes in relation to the total, e.g., 85% of responses within target timeframe.
- **Five-Point Scale** – Rates service quality across a spectrum (e.g., Unacceptable to Excellent), often used in satisfaction or experience-based indicators.
- **Weighted Scoring** – Combines multiple indicators with varying importance into a composite quality score.

6.2 Selecting the Right Scale

The selection of a quality scale should be based on:

- The nature of the service or work activity,
- The preferences of stakeholders,

- The type and volume of data available,
 - The level of granularity needed for analysis and reporting.
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7. Continuous Improvement in Work (Service) Quality

7.1 Feedback and Adaptation

The WSQ1 process encourages ongoing reflection and iterative improvement. Consumers and providers should jointly:

- Review performance data at agreed intervals,
- Identify areas for enhancement,
- Adjust quality objectives and methods as needed.

7.2 Strategies for Continuous Improvement

Improvement strategies may include:

- **Consumer Feedback Integration** – Structured surveys, interviews, or focus groups.
 - **Benchmarking** – Comparing results to sector standards or internal baselines.
 - **Training and Capacity Building** – Providing skill development for service staff.
 - **Root Cause Analysis** – Investigating gaps when objectives are not met.
-

8. Compliance and Implementation

8.1 Responsibilities of Consumers and Service Providers

Each party in the service relationship has a defined role:

- **Consumers** – Define expectations, engage in evaluations, and provide honest feedback.
- **Service Providers** – Deliver services according to the agreement, monitor quality indicators, and respond to findings with appropriate action.

8.2 Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring must be:

- **Regular** – Occurring at scheduled intervals.

- **Transparent** – Documented and made available to all parties.
- **Constructive** – Used to inform adjustments, not just compliance.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Key Takeaways

- Quality is measurable and collaborative.
- Indicators and objectives provide structure and accountability.
- Agreements between consumers and providers drive relevance and trust.
- Continuous improvement is essential to sustained service excellence.

9.2 Adoption of WSQ1

Organizations and individuals are encouraged to adopt WSQ1 as a foundational framework to align expectations, measure outcomes, and foster ongoing improvement across work and service settings.

10. Appendices

10.1 Sample Consumer-Provider Quality Agreement Template

Section		Details	
Consumer Name		[Full Name]	
Service Provider Name		[Full Name/Organization]	
Service/Work Description		[Brief Overview]	
Effective Date		[Start Date]	
Review Frequency		[Quarterly/Biannually/Annually]	
Quality Factor	Quality Indicator	Probe (Measurement Method)	Quality Objective
Timeliness of Service	Response time to requests	System-generated logs	≤ 24 hours
Consumer Satisfaction	Satisfaction score	Quarterly surveys	≥ 80% satisfaction
Compliance	Safety adherence	Inspection reports	100% compliance

Agreement Confirmation:

Both parties agree to uphold the Work (Service) Quality Standard (WSQ1) and collaborate on its implementation and review.

Signatures:

Consumer: _____ (Date)

Service Provider: _____ (Date)

10.2 Examples of Quality Elements by Sector

Vocational Rehabilitation

- Factor: Job Placement Success
- Indicator: % placed within 6 months
- Objective: $\geq 70\%$

Customer Support Services

- Factor: Response Time
- Indicator: Hours to resolution
- Objective: ≤ 2 hours

Healthcare Services

- Factor: Treatment Effectiveness
- Indicator: Recovery rate
- Objective: $\geq 85\%$

Disability Support Services

- Factor: Accessibility
- Indicator: Availability of assistive tech
- Objective: 100% compliance

10.3 Examples of Quality Scales

- **Binary Scale** – Met / Not Met
- **Percentage** – e.g., 90% of calls returned within 1 day
- **Five-Point Rating** – e.g., 1 = Unacceptable, 5 = Excellent
- **Weighted Score** – Combining metrics based on assigned value

10.4 References and Further Reading

- ISO 9001 Quality Management Systems

- Consumer-Centered Human Services Frameworks
 - OPWDD and SEMP Compliance Guidelines
 - CQL Personal Outcome Measures
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