



**UPHOLDING THE  
STANDARD FOR  
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE**

**SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MARK CIC**

# **The Social Enterprise Gold Mark and how it helps self evaluation and reflection**



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# What is the Social Enterprise Gold Mark?



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The Social Enterprise Gold Mark is a recognised standard of social enterprise excellence.

It is the only quality standard to provide a comprehensive framework for helping social enterprises build towards excellence and outstanding practice.

A non-HEI specific accreditation with a wide and broad approach.



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# Key KEF Concordat Principles



- Contributes in some way to most of the principles but will vary according to institution
- KE Concordat Principle 8 – Evaluating Success
  - Self assessment: e.g. Third party evidence of the value of interventions
  - Third-party evidence of contributions to local, national and global KE
  - Helps review and continually improve through 3 year action plan

# Approach to assessment



- Structured approach, but more of a personal method of presenting positive evidence
- Flexible and accounts for the size/capacity of the applicant
- Evidence is broad and non prescriptive
- Modular
  - Social Enterprise Mark assessment – Social Impact Statements help establish “base line” of best practice
  - Follow up with Social Enterprise Gold Mark assessment
- Great customer feedback about the process

# Assessment Framework



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The Gold Mark incorporates the six original criteria of the original Social Enterprise Mark, under five broader criteria of best practice covering a range of evidence possibilities

- **Must be an independent business**
- **Must have clear primary social objectives**
- **Majority (51+%) of any profits must be dedicated to social purposes**
- **On dissolution the organisation must distribute assets to social aims**
- **Must earn at least 50% of income through trading**
- **Must be able to demonstrate social objectives are being achieved**
- **Robust governance**
- **Effective stakeholder engagement**
- **Ethical and good business practice**
- **Financial transparency**
- **Social impact reporting**

# Robust governance



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- Robust governance means being able to demonstrate how a strong purpose is reflected in top-level governance arrangements, business planning and objective setting.
- A good social enterprise should be able to show there is an informed, capable, and accountable leadership, supported by appropriate structures that contribute towards the effective management of people and business interests

# Stakeholder Engagement



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- Effective stakeholder engagement is evident through how a social enterprise can show how different stakeholders have influenced plans and decision-making, helping ensure social objectives are being effectively targeted and served.
- A good social enterprise should be able to show how it has identified and prioritised different stakeholder groups, and how they are involved in governance and decision-making structures.

# Ethical Business Practice



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- A good social enterprise will employ ethical and effective business practices that reinforce its social values and contribute to the positive social differences it creates.

# Financial Transparency



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- A good social enterprise is financially transparent so that it may be held accountable, through demonstrating how annual income and accumulated profits have been used.
- This includes reporting on investments in support of social purposes and also how a social enterprise can show it manages finances responsibly and in ways that reinforce trading sustainability, which underpins the capability to create regular social benefit.

# Reporting Social Impact



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- A good social enterprise will regularly monitor and report on the social impact it creates – in terms of the scope of its social outputs and the benefits these deliver for people and communities.
- Measuring and reporting on these social outcomes provides transparency for stakeholders and should inform ongoing plans and developments.

# The Gold Mark Review Form



## Process

- In essence, a self-assessment of how Gold Mark criteria is being met.
- Walks people through different areas of social enterprise best practice to think about.
- Asks them to summarise “headlines” and link to evidence containing wider detail.
- Links should be to existing evidence – not manufactured to satisfy assessment.

# The Gold Mark Review Form and Assessment



## Key Features

- Flexible method – answer as much or as little seems relevant.
- Some minimum expectations but organisations should focus on areas of strength.
- It helps point the assessor to both positive evidence and possible development needs.
- Interviews (possibly a survey) with employees corroborate and build upon these “pointers”.

# Register your interest



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## **Web:**

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