



Program
EXCELLENCE

Program Quality Standards

Games & Competition Essentials Building Block

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Our Games & Competition Essentials quality standards relate to:

- **Competition Management** – including technical aspects of a competition (divisioning, advancement protocol), integrity of registration data and awards
- **Event Management** – including event delivery, promotion, operational elements (event team, opening & closing ceremonies, volunteer training)
- **Risk Management** – including mitigating risks at events related to budget, insurance, health & safety as well as emergency action plan and incident tracking.



For standards related to recruiting athletes, coaches and officials, see the Sport Essentials Building Block. For standards on general risk management, see the Planning & Financial Management Building Block.

Program Quality Standards

The Program Quality Standards are a tool to help Programs develop and grow. They were a 'ground-up' initiative - created with input from Programs in all Regions. The standards are for Special Olympics Accredited Programs, specifically for Program Leaders. They enable Program Leaders to understand, manage, support and deliver activities to a high level of quality.

Using the standards:

The standards are grouped into 10 'building blocks'. Within each building block, most standards have three stages. Read them from left to right – starting with Stage 1 and moving in the direction of Stage 3.

You can use the standards to conduct a self-assessment, help set goals for your strategic and operational plans, track your progress and celebrate your growth.

The standards can help you set goals in your plan, but do not replace your Program's plan which should outline specific growth goals. You may also consider using the self-assessment tool we have created to help you.



Games and Competitions	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Competition Management	Sport Rules, including Divisioning, are consistently applied ensuring fair play and competition for all athletes	All technical officials have met minimum Sport Governing Body certification requirements	Technical Delegates and sport-specific juries are in place and duties carried out efficiently, including handling protests
	Athletes have multiple competition opportunities, including Unified Sports, and Programs adhere to protocol for advancing to next level of competition	Program offers or participates in all levels of competition (local to World Games), including Unified Sports	
	Program collects accurate, timely event registration data	Web-based registration and GMS are used to gather data and run competitions	
	Awards presentations comply with awards protocol	Awards areas are designed to provide access for all awards participants	
Event Management	Program promotes competitions locally and makes schedules and results available in a timely fashion	Program promotes spectator attendance and proactively seeks wide coverage for events	Events are professionally promoted and event production delivers positive spectator experiences
	Event Management teams, including athlete leaders, are implemented appropriate to the size of the event	Functional area plans (e.g. medical, transport) are well integrated in the event plan and venue drawings are used	
	Program implements basic system for identifying event participants	Program uses credentialling system to manage event access and entitlements	Access control is implemented at all events
	Opening and Closing Ceremonies are athlete-focused and comply with protocol	Opening and Closing Ceremonies include an influential leader or celebrity	Opening and Closing Ceremonies are professionally produced
	Basic evaluation of events is conducted	Evaluation includes stakeholder feedback and is used to improve events	Event legacy plans are developed in advance and implemented after events
	All managers and other volunteers receive general orientation and job specific training prior to the event day	All volunteer roles have written job descriptions and volunteers are matched with roles according to their skills	
Risk Management	Events stay within budget and insurance is in place, including with third parties		
	Venues are set up according to local health & safety standards and Article 1 of the Sports Rules	Events have an emergency action plan which include crisis communication	Program implements a system for reporting, tracking and analyzing incidents