

Respondents guide to assessing a design or building with the DQI for Schools

These notes are for people who have been asked take part in an assessment of a design or school building with the DQI for Schools

What is the DQI for Schools?

The Design Quality Indicator (DQI) for Schools is a tool which provides a framework for the assessment of school design. It is used to assist teachers, parents, school governors, pupils, people from the community, local authority clients and building professionals achieve design excellence in new or refurbished school buildings and grounds.

The DQI for Schools has three parts, a questionnaire, weightings and visualisations.

The **DQI for Schools questionnaire** consists of statements that look at the **Functionality, Build Quality** and **Impact** of school buildings:

- **Functionality** looks at the way the building is designed to be useful. The statements are split into: **uses, access** and **space**
- **Build Quality** looks at the materials, and the different systems and conditions inside the building. The statements are split into **performance, engineering services** and **construction**.
- **Impact** refers to the building's effect on the local community and environment. The statements are split into: **character and innovation, form and materials, within the school** and **the school in its community**.

Who is involved in the process?

As a **DQI respondent** you will have been asked to complete the DQI for schools to assess a design or a school building which you are involved with. Every DQI for Schools assessment is slightly different but there will be a **DQI leader** assigned to help manage the process of using the DQI, they might be a client, architect, project manager, client design advisor or someone else. There should also be a **facilitator**, an impartial person who has been brought in to help get the most from the process of using the DQI. They will not be completing the DQI for Schools and are there to help you with any questions or queries you might have. Facilitators registered with CIC have knowledge of the building process and sector you are working in. They will be able to help with any general questions about the process, or demystify any specialist language generated in discussions.

Using the DQI for Schools

You will be asked to complete the DQI for schools either online with computers or offline on paper. You will have been asked to complete the DQI either in a workshop with other stakeholders or maybe on your own. If you are completing the DQI for

schools on your own then the facilitator will need to thoroughly brief you on what the process is trying to achieve.

Online

You will either be in a workshop with other respondents, or you may be completing the tool alone, and coming together later to discuss the results.

To use the DQI for Schools the DQI leader or a facilitator will give you an 8 digit **DQI respondent key**, or a hyperlink which will take you to the **DQI respondent welcome page**. If you have a key enter the tool from the homepage using the [DQI Tool](#) link. You should then click on the [DQI respondent](#) link and follow the onscreen instructions to enter the tool. Once you have started you online questionnaire you can leave at any time, but you must complete your questionnaire within 3 days. If you leave the tool you will need the DQI respondent key and your **password** used to register with the tool to re-enter.



When using the DQI for schools the discussion generated by the process is as important a part of the session as scoring solutions. The facilitator and leader will help capture points.

Once you have completed the questionnaire click [submit](#) to see your results. Your views on the building will also have been submitted towards the overall assessment.

Offline

You are likely to be completing the DQI for Schools offline in a workshop environment with other respondents accompanied by the DQI leader and probably a facilitator.

If you are completing the DQI offline the facilitator or DQI leader will give you a paper form. Once completed you must return this to the DQI leader or facilitator who will enter the information online before you can see your results and they count towards the whole assessment.


A valid response requires that you consider 90% of the questionnaire (113 questions) and all the weightings sections - please check this before handing back. (Don't Know and Not Applicable count as valid responses).

Completing the DQI for Schools

Your choice of response during assessment

You have six choices of answer to each statement from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. **The statements posed are general, and should be answered according to your perceptions.** It is your personal opinion that is important rather than your organisation's viewpoint. There are also 'Don't Know' and 'Not Applicable' options. Depending on the nature of the building project and your role within it, some questions may not be applicable or you might not know the answer. This is fine and will not be calculated into the results.

Notes and greyed out questions

If you are completing the DQI for School online you may notice that some statements have a note icon like this next to them . Clicking on the icon will bring up text about how the statement relates to your project for you to consider.



If need help as you go along clicking on the information button next to questions will give you further hints about what you are being asked to think about. When completing the tool offline the tips are available in an appendix.

Also when completing the DQI for Schools online some questions may appear greyed out, this means that earlier in the building process they have been generally deemed not applicable to the project. If you feel you can answer the question you still can, and this is important because priorities change throughout the building process and answering these questions will highlight this.

Weightings sections

At the end of each section (functionality, build quality and impact) and at the end of the questionnaire there are summary sections. In these sections you need to weight the relative importance you would give to each sub-section when set against the other by allocating points. A maximum of 15 (or 20 in impact) points can be allocated and you should allocate between 0 and 15 (or 20) to each section. If you have no weighting then you should allocate each section 5 points.

An analogy for how this system works is 15 (or 20) £1 coins, if you think a section is more important you can allocate it more £1 coins, and if it is less important allocate it less, or even none.

Likes and Dislikes

Once you have completed the questionnaire you can list three things you like and dislike about the design or building.

Results

When your questionnaire has been submitted (and uploaded if completed on paper) you will be able to view your results.

For further guidance on understanding the visualisation of your results please see 'Analysing your DQI results', which is available as a PDF from the website, though the DQI leader and facilitator should have a copy.

Questions

You should direct any questions to the facilitator or the DQI leader.

If you have a problem with using the DQI for Schools online tool please email CIC at dqi@cic.org.uk.