



## SUMMARY OF THE TWELVE BENCHMARK STANDARDS

In order to become a Certified Member, within the 21 hours you will need to demonstrate a minimum of 1 hour (formal or informal) of CPD against each of the mandatory standards – 1, 2 or 3, 7, 8, 9 & 10.

***STANDARD 1: Ethical and legal considerations governing the conduct of MRS members***

***STANDARD 2: Research within its broad political/economic social/ technological context***

***STANDARD 3: The role of research in decision making within an organisation***

***STANDARD 4: Client and supply relationships in research***

***STANDARD 5: Project management (including planning and the use of resources)***

***STANDARD 6: Oral and/or written communication skills***

***STANDARD 7: Awareness and evaluation of research methodologies***

***STANDARD 8: Conducting all or part of a research project***

***STANDARD 9: A nominated specialist area in research***

***STANDARD 10: Quality control and assessment in research***

***STANDARD 11: Commitment to your own personal and professional development***

***STANDARD 12: Commitment to the development of others and or the profession***

**The standards are listed in detail on the following pages:**

**Standard 1: Ethical & legal considerations governing the conduct of MRS members**

<b>Mandatory Specification:</b>  You will need to demonstrate your understanding of the relevance of the MRS Code of Conduct to your work.  You may have had problems to solve which raised ethical issues or you may have been responsible for ensuring compliance with the MRS Code of Conduct. You may have had to intervene to ensure that research was undertaken in accordance with MRS Regulations and guidelines. You may have managed fieldwork involving hard to reach or vulnerable people or on a sensitive topic.	<b>Assessment:</b>  A candidate who meets the standard should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.</li><li>- be able to demonstrate working knowledge of the MRS Code and its relevance to their work.</li></ul>
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**Standard 2: Research within its broad political/economic/social/technological context**

<b>Mandatory Specification:</b>  You may have been involved in a research project which demanded an understanding of the broad political / social / economic / technological context of the research topic or you may have needed to set the findings in one or more of these contexts.  Alternatively, you may have an understanding of the wider issues relating to a specific aspect of the research sector (e.g. field, operations etc.) You may have been responsible for ensuring that interviewers/recruiters or junior research staff understood the wider context of a research project.	<b>Assessment:</b>  A candidate who meets the standard should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.</li><li>- demonstrate the range of perspectives they consider, the range of implications they perceive and their depth of understanding.</li></ul>
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**Standard 3: The role of research in decision making within an organisation****Mandatory  
Specification:**

You may have used research results to make recommendations that influence strategic decision-making, for example, in relation to products, services, marketing or planning.

You may direct or play a role in a research business or a division of a larger public or private sector organisation.

Alternatively, you may have managed fieldwork, data processing or operations within an organisation and had to reflect on how it fits into organizational business or culture.

**Assessment:**

A candidate who meets the standard should:

- provide examples of how this standard is applied to their working life.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the role research can play in organisational decision making, tactical or strategic.

**Standard 4: Client & supply side relationships****Specification:**

Experience might include establishing and managing relationships with internal and/or external clients and suppliers; liaising over respondent complaints/queries; discussing fieldwork or data analysis/response rate problems; engaging with clients pre and post fieldwork.

**Assessment:**

A candidate who meets the standard should:

- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.
- provide examples of the relationships, how they have been developed and why they are important.

**Standard 5: Project management (inc. planning & use of resources)****Specification:**

Experience may include allocation and supervision of people and other resources (e.g. financial, infrastructure, data, technology, panels, fieldwork reports etc) and/or the management of projects.

**Assessment:**

A candidate who meets the standard should:

- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.
- provide evidence of effective planning making a difference to a research project.
- provide examples of good resources allocation and the difference it has made.
- provide evidence of their role in the allocation of resources.

<b>Standard 6: Oral &amp;/or written communication skills</b>	
<p><b><u>Specification:</u></b></p> <p>You may have given presentations to clients, people in your organisation, suppliers or fieldworkers, or led informal discussions with clients. You may have written project briefs; research summaries; research reports, fieldwork reports or debrief documents; formal conference papers or journal articles or non research papers relating to other issues.</p>	<p><b><u>Assessment:</u></b></p> <p>A candidate who meets the standard should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.</li> </ul>

<b>Standard 7: Awareness &amp; evaluation of research methodologies</b>	
<p><b><u>Mandatory Specification:</u></b></p> <p>Though you are not expected to have a detailed knowledge of <i>all</i> research approaches, it is very important that you show an awareness of different methodologies, and demonstrate a broad understanding of when each is best used. Experience might include deciding on appropriate methodologies for particular research projects; balancing the ideal method with pragmatic issues, like budget and time; developing new or adapting existing methods to suit particular circumstances and briefing and debriefing on different methodologies evaluating pitfalls. For those in fieldwork management, experience may include commenting or advising on the viability and/or appropriateness of various methodologies in different circumstances.</p>	<p><b><u>Assessment:</u></b></p> <p>A candidate who meets the standard should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.</li> <li>- demonstrate a working knowledge and understanding of the range of research methodologies and techniques such that they can advise a non researcher on an appropriate approach.</li> </ul> <p><i>OR</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- demonstrate depth of working knowledge and experience in the application of one or more specialist areas, and an appreciation of the range of research methodologies and techniques such that they can advise a non researcher on an appropriate approach.</li> </ul>

**Standard 8: Conducting all or part of a research project****Mandatory****Specification:**

You must demonstrate experience within the project life cycle either as a specialist researcher, a provider of operational resources, a buyer of research or as a manager of research functions including fieldwork and data processing. This may include demonstration of an understanding of the research process at different stages e. g.

- Identification of a problem
- Data Collection
- Data analysis
- Reporting or understanding of a whole project
- Managing the fieldwork for a range of projects

**Assessment:**

A candidate who meets the standard should:

- provide examples of their part of the research project
- demonstrate how the part of the research process for which they were responsible fitted into the whole research project.

**Standard 9: A nominated specialist area in research****Mandatory****Specification:**

The specialist area may be broad or narrow and may relate to

- methodology (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, online, etc)
- sector (e.g. automotive, financial, international, public policy, b2b, b2c etc)
- respondent type (e.g. children, seniors, ethnicity, etc)
- management (of operations, fieldwork eg response issues hard to reach respondents, data processing or analysis, etc)
- managing a research business
- purchasing research
- knowledge management

**Assessment:**

A candidate who meets the standard should:

- provide examples of specialist knowledge and how this standard is applied in their working life.
- discuss key issues and/or developments in their chosen specialist area.

**Standard 10: Quality assurance in research**

<b>Mandatory Specification:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
<p>You need to demonstrate an understanding of the relevance and importance of quality assurance approaches in research.</p> <p>This is a broad standard, relating to all aspects of quality assurance.</p> <p>You may have experience of ensuring the quality and integrity of research in your organisation.</p> <p>You may have experience with some of the formal quality standards, that relate specifically to research quality control (e.g. ISO 20252, ISO 26362, IQCS, etc) or are broader in scope (e.g. ISO 9001) or standards which are internal to your organisation. This might be at the research design, data collection, analysis or reporting stage. Experience might relate either to research or be specific to your work.</p> <p>You may have had to make judgements about whether research is fit for purpose or make quality-timeliness tradeoffs.</p>	<p>A candidate who meets the standard should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the principles of quality control and assurance in the research you conduct.</li><li>- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.</li><li>- provide evidence of their understanding of the role of quality standards in research.</li></ul>

**Standard 11: Commitment to your own personal & professional development**

<b>Specification:</b>	<b>Assessment:</b>
<p>This can include formal and informal development in a variety of formats, including face to face, written, e-learning, or other IT formats, such as social media, blogs, forums etc: It may relate specifically to research or to broader skills (e.g. management, business, learning on the job, work shadowing etc).</p>	<p>A candidate who meets the standard should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.</li><li>- provide evidence of their commitment to their own development.</li></ul>

**Standard 12: Commitment to the development of others and/or the profession****Specification:**

This can include: managing appraisal and/or development of others; writing articles to benefit others; preparing and delivering conference papers; teaching on and/or leading training events and seminars.

**Assessment:**

A candidate who meets the standard should:

- provide examples of how this standard is applied in their working life.
- provide evidence of their contribution to the development of others on one or more occasions and awareness of the implications of these contributions for others.