



How to complete an Opra for waste facilities spreadsheet

April 2017

We are the Environment Agency. We protect and improve the environment and make it a better place for people and wildlife.

We operate at the place where environmental change has its greatest impact on people's lives. We reduce the risks to people and properties from flooding; make sure there is enough water for people and wildlife; protect and improve air, land and water quality and apply the environmental standards within which industry can operate.

Acting to reduce climate change and helping people and wildlife adapt to its consequences are at the heart of all that we do.

We cannot do this alone. We work closely with a wide range of partners including government, business, local authorities, other agencies, civil society groups and the communities we serve.

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1. What is this user guide for?

This guide will help you to produce or revise the operational risk appraisal (Opra) banded profile for your waste facility. It's aimed at operators who are applying for a waste facility permit, a surrender, or a variation which now includes landfill closure, and who need to complete or amend an Opra spreadsheet.

This document relates specifically to Opra for waste facilities. The requirements for the Opra Scheme for installations is different and separate guidance is available to help you.

An Opra banded profile is only required for waste facilities regulated under the Environmental Permitting Regulations that have or need a more complex, bespoke permit, for a higher-risk activity than those covered by standard rules permits or other tier 2 permits. These types of facilities are referred to as tier 3 facilities.

This guide is designed to save you time when producing your Opra banded profile.

To complete your Opra profile will need to refer to the Opra Scheme, version 3.91 and associated annex for waste facilities. This gives further information about Opra and the five attributes that make up an Opra banded profile.

By reading this document, and with access to the information mentioned above, you should be able to complete or amend your Opra banded profile.

You will always find the most up to date version of this guide along with the Opra for waste facilities spreadsheet and information about the Opra Scheme by calling our general enquiry on 03708 506 506.

The Environment Agency would welcome any comments on this User Guide; please email these to: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk.

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2. Background

Opra is a risk-screening scheme that allows you to generate a banded profile for your waste facility.

The Opra banded profile has five attributes:

- Complexity
- Emissions
- Location
- Operator performance
- Compliance rating (NB, this attribute is only taken into account following the issue of the permit when our compliance assessment activities have started).

As you complete the spreadsheet you will answer questions about the first four of these attributes for your site. The questions are about the facility you operate or intend to operate, where you operate, and how it's managed.

Your answers to these questions give a banding for each attribute, which ranges from A to E, where A requires less and E more regulatory effort from us.

The spreadsheet has built-in look-up tables that will calculate your Opra score for you. Version 1.9 of the spreadsheet provides scores and charges relevant for the 2017 financial year.

The compliance rating attribute is used only after the permit is issued and once calculated this will be used to adjust your annual subsistence charge. You do not need to complete this attribute.

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3. Before you start

Before you start you will require a copy of the following documents:

- Opra Scheme, version 3.91 and associated annex for waste facilities;
- The waste facilities Opra spreadsheet – version 1.9;
- Your EPR application, if you are applying for a new permit;
- A copy of the Environmental Permitting Charging Scheme Guidance 2014;
- The postcode of the facility concerned. This allows you to use the Environment Agency's "[What's In Your Back Yard](#)" web pages to find out information about the location attribute.

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4. Getting Started

Open the waste facilities Opra spreadsheet.

Once opened, you should save the spreadsheet. This will allow you to model different scenarios – for example you will be able to assess how having improved management systems impacts on both your total Opra score and your charges.

Opra Spreadsheet for Waste Facilities Version: 1.6 Release Date: 01-Apr-11

Permit No: Site Name:

Date: Operator:

Attribute	Bands	Points
Complexity(s):		
Emissions:		
Location:		
Operator Performance:		
Incomplete	Total:	

Complete your profile to display charges

Fees and Charges	
Application Fee	
Normal Variation	
Full Surrender	
Part Surrender	
Closure	
Subsistence	See Charge Tables

[Compliance Rating](#) Subsistence Multiplier **100%**

[Reference Sheet](#)

Note: The version number of the spreadsheet will change at the start of each financial year

The Opra spreadsheet has four different tabs. You will need to enter information on the first three tabs. The last tab, "References", contains information which allows calculations to be made in response to the answers you provide on the first three tabs.

You can only enter information in the white areas of the spreadsheet. Other areas are protected. Information entry is as straightforward as possible using drop-down lists where possible. This applies particularly to recording your answers for the complexity and location attributes.

To move between tabs, place your cursor on the grey tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet and click. Once you have entered data into the tables, the spreadsheet will automatically calculate the banded profile for your site and give you information about charges for application, surrender and variation which now includes landfill closure.

You may find it useful to keep a record of any reasoning you have made in completing the profile, or any queries that you have, so that they can be used for future discussions with our staff.

Place your cursor over the small red triangle in the top left hand side of some fields to see further hints and tips on what is required in that box will be displayed.

You are not required to complete the compliance rating box on this spreadsheet. The compliance rating only affects annual subsistence charges and not application charges, therefore you can leave this blank.

The rest of this document provides details on how to complete the spreadsheet and where to go for further information.

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5. First tab – summary and calculation

This tab provides you with summary information about your Opra profile and gives you an indication of likely charges.

Opra Spreadsheet for Waste Facilities Version: 1.6 Release Date: 01-Apr-11

Permit No: Site Name:

Date: Operator:

Attribute	Bands	Points
Complexity(s):		
Emissions:		
Location:		
Operator Performance:		
Incomplete	Total:	

Complete your profile to display charges

Fees and Charges	
Application Fee	
Normal Variation	
Full Surrender	
Part Surrender	
Closure	
Subsistence	See Charge Tables

[Compliance Rating](#) Subsistence Multiplier **100%**

[Reference Sheet](#)



Note: The version number of the spreadsheet will change at the start of each financial year

When you apply for a new tier 3 permit, you only need to complete information in three boxes: name of site, name of operator and date form completed. If you are applying for a variation, which now also includes landfill closure, surrender (full or part) you also need to complete the permit number field.

As you complete information on other tabs, the spreadsheet will automatically update fields on this tab relating to complexity, emissions, location, and operator performance. It will also give you an indication of likely charges for the current financial year, based on the charge multipliers for application, surrender, variation and landfill closure.

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6. Second tab – complexity, emissions/inputs and location attributes

Complexity

For a new application, you need to identify the type of site that you are planning to operate. The facility types are listed in Annex B – Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities, version 3.91. Click on the drop-down menu in the spreadsheet to see a full list of site types and select the one relevant to you.

A more detailed description of the facility type codes we use is available in Appendix 1 of this document.

These are listed as A1 to A29. For example, if your site is a material recycling facility, you would select A15. This would automatically generate a complexity band of A. For waste facilities with more than one activity, please refer to Annex B - Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities for further information.

Complexity Attribute			Emissions Attribute (Waste Input)				
Site Type:	A15	Complexity Band:	A				
2nd Site Type:	...	2nd Band:					
<p>Complexity Bands are based on a lookup table (see References tab) More than one Complexity (Site Type) is required only in circumstances where the permit in question covers a landfill activity and a treating/keeping activity. In all other circumstances only one site type should be entered. Where more than one site type applies, the one carrying the highest relevant complexity band is used.</p>			Waste Type	Annual Tonnage	Emission Threshold	Emission Index	
			Inert		1000		
			Non Hazardous (Non Bio)		750		
			Non Hazardous (Bio)		500		
			Hazardous		250		
			Total:				Band:
			Emission Bands are based on total index: <10=A, <100=B, <1000=C, <10000=D, >=10000=E				
Location Attribute							
Question	Answer	Points	Question	Answer	Points		
Proximity to Human Occupation:	>1km		Direct run-offs:	No			
Assessment under wildlife, countryside or habitats legislation:	No		Air Quality Management Zone:	No			
Groundwater/Aquifers:	No		Flood Plain:	No			
Sensitivity of surface water:	None		Total Points:				
					Band:	A	
Location Bands are based on total points: 1-4=A, 5-8=B, 9-12=C, 13-18=D, >18=E							

Note: The version number of the spreadsheet will change at the start of each financial year

For landfill only - If you operate a landfill and for example, a transfer station, on the same site, you will need to enter a second site type on the spreadsheet. See Annex B – Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities for more information.

For mobile plant only – Select the A24 complexity code. The location attribute will automatically default to a complexity Band A. The emissions and inputs attribute will automatically default to a Band B. You must complete the Operator Performance attribute by answering all the questions in this section. See Section 7 of this guide.

For Combustion and Landfill Gas – Select the A29 code. The emissions attribute will automatically default to a band A.

Emissions/Inputs (waste inputs)

In this section, you will need to identify the maximum annual tonnage of waste you will be permitted to accept at the facility. Where you are revising an existing profile, such as for a variation application, these figures should reflect the waste limits specified in your current permit.

The annual tonnage will need to be broken down into inert, non-hazardous (non-biodegradable), non-hazardous (biodegradable) and hazardous and the appropriate figures inserted into the Annual Tonnage boxes in the Emissions Attribute (Waste Input) table.

Once you have entered your annual waste tonnages, the spreadsheet will automatically calculate the emissions index and give the emissions attribute (waste inputs) band.

Complexity Attribute			Emissions Attribute (Waste Input)			
Site Type:	A15	Complexity Band:	A			
2nd Site Type:	...	2nd Band:				
<p>Complexity Bands are based on a lookup table (see References tab) More than one Complexity (Site Type) is required only in circumstances where the permit in question covers a landfill activity and a treating/keeping activity. In all other circumstances only one site type should be entered. Where more than one site type applies, the one carrying the highest relevant complexity band is used.</p>			Waste Type	Annual Tonnage	Emission Threshold	Emission Index
			Inert		1000	
			Non Hazardous (Non Bio)	20,000	750	27
			Non Hazardous (Bio)		500	
			Hazardous		250	
			Total:			27
						Band: B
			Emission Bands are based on total index: <10=A, <100=B, <1000=C, <10000=D, >=10000=E			
Location Attribute						
Question	Answer	Points	Question	Answer	Points	
Proximity to Human Occupation:	>1km		Direct run-offs:	No		
Assessment under wildlife, countryside or habitats legislation:	No		Air Quality Management Zone:	No		
Groundwater/Aquifers:	No		Flood Plain:	No		
Sensitivity of surface water:	None		Total Points:			
					Band: A	
Location Bands are based on total points: 1-4=A, 5-8=B, 9-12=C, 13-18=D, >18=E						

Location

There are seven questions concerning the location of your site and you need to select the appropriate response to each question from the drop-down boxes.

The answers will identify the level of risk of the waste facility may be affecting the local environment.

The questions relate to:

Human occupation

This is normally determined by the distance from the waste facility boundary to the nearest public or private occupied building (house, school, office, hospital, nursing home etc). This also includes open spaces where people are regularly present (playing fields, allotments, parks). Exclude buildings containing your employees as you have a responsibility towards them under Health and Safety Legislation. You can find detailed information about this attribute in Annex B – Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities. You then score this element of the location attribute dependent upon the distance from the facility to the occupied building according to your findings.

Assessment under wildlife, countryside or habitats legislation

Your answers to this question will reflect how close your site is to important nature conservation sites. For further information on this section please refer to Annex B – Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities.

You can find out how close you is to a Habitats or Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) site by looking on the Natural England or Natural Resources Wales websites: [Natural England](#) - [Natural Resources Wales](#)

Alternatively you can use the interactive maps on Defra's MAGIC website. This is a web-based interactive map service which brings together environmental information from across government and is managed by Natural England; <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

Where you have identified that your site is relevant for Habitats and/or an assessment is required for CRoW, based on criteria described in the Annex B – Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities, you will need to select whether it is Habitats or CRoW in the drop-down box in Assessment under wildlife, countryside or habitats legislation. If neither of these are applicable leave this section blank.

If your facility is subject to both Habitats and CRoW, then select Habitats from the drop-down box.

Groundwater/Aquifers

To fill in this question you will need to find out if your site is:

- On an aquifer and in a Groundwater Protection Zone (GPZ); or
- On an aquifer but not in a GPZ; or
- Not on an aquifer.

You can find if your site is in a GPZ (often referred to as groundwater source protection zone) or on an aquifer from our website, in the What's in Your Back Yard (WIYBY) section. To find this, click on the following link [What's in Your Back Yard](#). Select the option "Go Straight to Maps" and click on the icon for "Groundwater". Type in the postcode of your facility.

First select groundwater source protection zones from the map legend on the left hand side of the screen. Locate your facility on the map and if any part of it is covered by any of the colours in the map legend then your facility is in a groundwater source protection zone. Score this accordingly.

If you are not in a GPZ, you must then check if you are on an aquifer. On the map legend select both options of aquifer maps, i.e. superficial deposits designation and bedrock designation.

If your facility is covered by one of the colours from the map legend for aquifer maps then your facility is on an aquifer. Score this accordingly.

Sensitivity of receiving water

You don't need to make an entry for sensitivity of receiving waters if your site drainage is an entirely enclosed system where:

- All surface or foul waters are discharged via public foul water sewers and go to a sewage treatment works for treatment; and
- There is no possible pathway for any accidental release within the regulated facility to reach a watercourse; and
- Your site is over 10 metres from any receiving water;

If the boundary of your site is within 10 metres of any receiving water, even if your site drainage is an entirely closed system, you need to make an entry for the sensitivity of receiving waters.

To obtain information on the quality of surface waters check the WIYBY pages on our website: [River Quality](#) or contact your local Environment Agency office on 03708 506 506.

In WIYBY, enter your postcode and click "Go" find the nearest river quality sampling points (marked as blue triangles) relevant to your site. Click on the appropriate (adjacent or downstream) triangle to establish the latest classification. Use the conversion in Annex B – Opra Scheme for waste facilities to change the classification letter to a grade score.

Once you have identified the sensitivity of the receiving water for any discharges to surface water, click on the drop down box and select the relevant grade.

Direct run-offs

If there are any direct run-offs to water for example by a surface water drain, then please select whether or not this is via an interceptor or not using the drop-down menu.

Air Quality Management Zones

Air Quality Management Zones (AQMZ) - Air quality management zones (AQMZ) are areas the local council have identified as needing a plan to improve their air quality.

It will be unusual for a waste facility to emit a declared pollutant and therefore you are likely to either select option within an AQMZ but does not emit a declared pollutant or not within an AQMZ'.

Information on the location of AQMZs is available from your local authority; these may be known as Air Quality Management Areas. Further information is also available from <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/maps>- click on the relevant local authority to find any relevant zones. This site displays maps indicating the extent of AQMZs.

Flood plain

You can find out if your facility is in a flood plain and at risk of flooding, by entering your facility's postcode in our flood-risk mapping tool. You can access this facility on our website at: [Flood Plain](#).

Enter the postcode of your site in the "Are you at risk of flooding?" box and search. If any part of your waste facility is indicated as in the flood plain, then you must score it as "Yes".

Once you have answered all the questions concerning the location attribute, you will see a band displayed on this tab for your site, based on the responses you gave.

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7. Third tab – Operator Performance

In this section you need to answer questions concerning your management procedures and recent enforcement history. In most cases, the answers are Yes or No. For some of the questions you will need to enter a number.

The questions will reflect the complexity of risk of the activity you undertake. For example you will answer fewer questions for a low-risk material recycling facility than you will for a high-risk hazardous waste transfer station.

For new applications, once the permit has been issued, we will carry out an audit to assess the quality of your management system.

If you indicate that you have an externally audited management system, you must provide evidence of this with your application, giving details of the certificate, the certification body and the body's registration number with UKAS (UK Accreditation Service).

Click on the drop-down box after each question and select the relevant answer. You should answer all the questions you are asked. Some of the procedures you are asked about may be covered in the information you have submitted as part of your application.

Enforcement history

To enter your enforcement history, click on the white box on the right hand side of the question and type in the number of enforcement notices etc. You may need to check with your local Environment Agency office on relevant convictions and if they need to be included. Also check the Annex B – Opra Scheme for Waste Facilities as this provides details on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and how long a conviction is relevant for before it is spent.

Only enforcement actions that have taken place at the facility in question should be included in the assessment. Other facilities should not be included.

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Appendix 1 – Facility Type Code

Descriptions

A01 Co-disposal landfill site

Former landfill facility permitted to receive ranges of commercial, household and/or industrial waste which required special precautions in their handling including that which was classed as Hazardous under the Hazardous Waste Regulations (Excluding bonded asbestos) together with municipal waste which is capable of decomposition, or similar degradable wastes.

A02 –Other landfill site taking hazardous waste

Former landfill facility permitted to accept Household Commercial/inert waste but in addition permitted to take bonded asbestos as the only form of hazardous waste.

A03 - Borehole (Closed)

Permitted facility for the disposal of liquids, directly into the ground via boreholes.

A04 – Household, commercial and industrial waste landfill

Former landfill facility permitted to accept controlled waste from any source, excluding those permitted to receive purely non-biodegradable waste and/or permitted to accept hazardous or other wastes, which require special precautions in their handling. This category also included facilities exclusively permitted to accept Household, or Commercial or Industrial wastes.

A04 - Dredging sites

Facility permitted to accept dredgings.

A05 - Landfill taking non-biodegradable wastes

Former facilities permitted to accept purely non-biodegradable waste for landfill. This category would not include construction/demolition wastes or canal dredgings.

L05 – Landfill Directive Compliant Inert Landfill

Facilities permitted to accept inert waste for landfill which are Landfill Directive compliant.

The definition of inert waste in Article 2 of the Landfill Directive is waste that:

- Will not undergo any significant physical, chemical or biological transformations
- Will not dissolve
- Will not burn
- Will not physically or chemically react
- Will not biodegrade
- Will not adversely affect other matter with which it comes into contact in a way likely to give rise to environmental pollution or to harm human health
- Has insignificant total leachability and pollutant content
- Produces a leachate with an ecotoxicity that is insignificant (if it produces a leachate)

This means that it will not be worth testing waste to show that it is inert unless the waste appears to consist only of insoluble inorganic material.

Many of the materials sent to what were called ‘inert’ landfills in the past will not meet this definition.

This category includes any Landfill Directive compliant inert landfills that are operational and were previously coded as an A05.

A06 – Landfill taking other wastes

Former landfill facility permitted to accept construction and demolition waste including canal dredgings etc.

A07 - Industrial waste landfill (factory curtilage) A08 - Lagoon

Permitted facilities that have been artificially constructed for the containment, storage or disposal of liquids but not for treatment purposes, e.g. dredging lagoons, leachate lagoon or an active digestate lagoon.

A09 - Hazardous waste transfer station

Facilities permitted to receive any type of hazardous and non-hazardous waste or solely hazardous waste, for transfer between modes of transport and/or bulking up. This may include some forms of treatment, such as compaction, provided that they are solely for the purpose of improving payloads. This category will include asbestos waste transfer stations.

A10 - In-house storage facility

Facilities permitted for the storage of waste on the same premises where the waste was produced.

The storage of waste under this category should be covered by the exemptions review.

A11 - Household, commercial and industrial waste transfer station

A transfer station which is permitted to accept predominantly non-hazardous waste but may also include the storage and manual sorting of hazardous WEEE, for transfer between modes of transport and/or bulking up. This may include some forms of treatment both manual and mechanical, such as manual and physical sorting, and compaction provided that they are solely for the purpose of improving payloads.

A12 - Clinical waste transfer station

Facility permitted to accept wastes from human or animal health care and/or related research for transfer between modes of transport and/or bulking up. This category includes the storage of waste at Part B incinerators. This may include some forms of treatment both manual and mechanical, such as manual and physical sorting, and compaction provided that they are solely for the purpose of improving payloads.

A13 - Household waste amenity site not taking hazardous waste

Facilities permitted to receive non-hazardous household waste from householders. and non-hazardous commercial and industrial waste from businesses.

A13a - Household waste amenity site taking hazardous waste

Facilities permitted to receive non-hazardous and hazardous household waste from householders and non-hazardous commercial and industrial waste from businesses.

A14 - Transfer station taking non-biodegradable wastes

Facility permitted to accept non-biodegradable waste predominately inert for transfer. This may include manual sorting/separation at the facility. For example an inert waste transfer station or a facility which can accept waste from a cable laying operation.

A15 - Material recycling facility

Facilities permitted to accept inert and/or non-hazardous waste solely for the purposes of recycling by physical means. This will include hand sorting and mechanical separation of commingled dry recyclables, e.g. conveyors/air classifiers, eddy current separators or magnets. This doesn't include inert excavation waste.

A16 – Non-hazardous waste physical treatment facility

Facilities permitted to accept any type of controlled non-hazardous waste for the purpose of subjecting it to any physical process intended to change its properties, e.g. soil screening or Refuse Derived Fuels (RDF), crushing, baling, pelletising, etc.

Note – this category does not permit mixed loads of wastes for the purpose of removing recyclable materials and residual wastes sent to landfill.

A16a Hazardous waste physical treatment facility

Facilities permitted to accept any type of controlled hazardous waste for the purpose of subjecting it to any physical process intended to change its properties.

A17 – Physical and chemical treatment facility

Facilities permitted to treat wastes by a combination of both physical and chemical means for the purposes of disposal and/or recovery.

Note – This category does not cover activities which are solely physical treatment or chemical treatment. These are covered by other categories.

A18 - Incinerator (Other than pet crematorium)

Facilities permitted to receive any type of controlled waste for the purpose of waste disposal by incineration.

A19 - Metal recycling site (vehicle dismantler)

Any facility which is permitted to predominately accept vehicles, this may include the acceptance of hazardous waste associated with vehicle dismantling operations. This category includes end of life vehicles.

A19a - End of life vehicles <2500 tonne per year

Any facility which is permitted to accept predominantly vehicles. This may include the acceptance of hazardous waste associated with vehicle dismantling operations.

A20 - Metal recycling site (MRS) (mixed)

Permitted facilities, whose primary purpose is to keep and treat metal waste for reuse or recycling. These facilities may also permit the dismantling of de-polluted vehicles in addition to other activities. This may include hazardous wastes such as WEEE, batteries and swarf contaminated with hazardous waste.

A21 - Chemical treatment facility

Facilities permitted to receive any waste for the purpose of subjecting it to any chemical process intended to change its properties.

A22 - Composting facility

Facilities permitted to receive any type of biodegradable waste for the purposes of subjecting it to an aerobic biological process. For example this will include open and in- vessel composting facilities.

A23 - Biological treatment facility

Facilities permitted to primarily receive any type of bio-degradable waste for the purpose of subjecting it to any biological process intended to change its properties e.g. anaerobic digestion and all Mechanical Biological Treatment.

A24 - Mobile plant (dependent on number of deployments)

-waste mobile plant means plant that is—

- (a) designed to move or be moved whether on roads or other land,
- (b) used to carry on a waste operation, and not an installation, Part A mobile plant or Part B mobile plant

A25 - Deposit of waste to land as a recovery operation

Permanent recovery of waste on land, e.g. construction activities such as noise bunds, flood defences or low level restoration for ecological improvement.

A 26 – Not yet in use**A27 – Incinerator (pet crematorium)**

Facilities permitted to receive any animal carcass, e.g. pets, for the purpose of disposal by incineration.

A28 – Not yet in use**A29 – Combustion and landfill gas engines**

Facilities permitted to burn bio-gas or landfill gas.

For example landfill gas engines, combined heat and power plants/engines burning biogas at sewage treatment plants etc.

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More information

All the Opra documents are available by calling our general enquiry line on 03708 506 506.

If you have any questions or comments on Opra, or suggestions about how we could improve either the scheme or any of the supporting documents, please email us at enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk, phone us on 03708 506 506 or write to us at:

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99 Parkway Avenue
Sheffield
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We welcome your views, including comments about this document. If you are happy with our service, please tell us about it, as this helps us to identify good practice and rewards our staff. If you are unhappy with our service, please let us know how we can improve it.

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