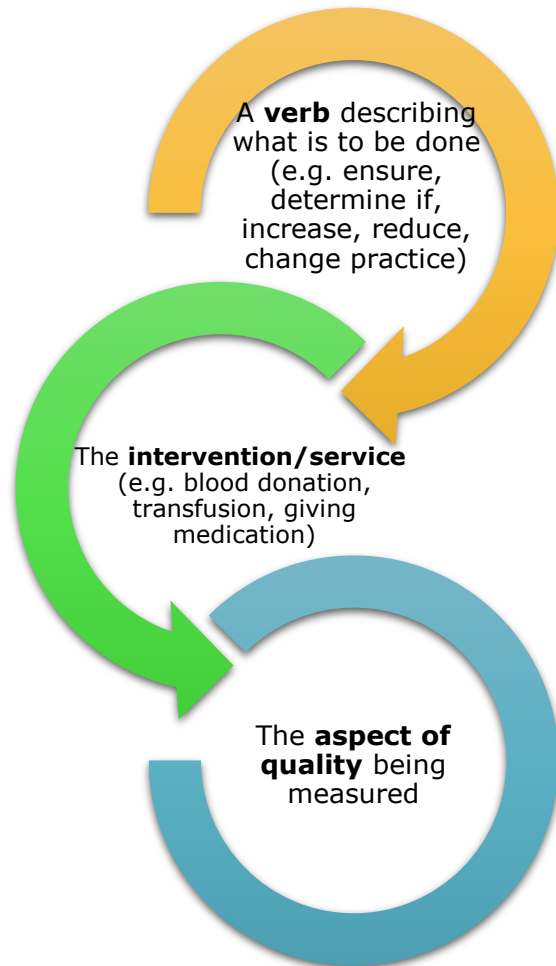


How to Write Objectives

Each objective should contain three elements:



Contact Us

For advice or support on any aspect of clinical audit at NHSBT, contact the Clinical Audit Team:

✉ clinical.audit@nhsbt.nhs.uk

<https://nhsbloodandtransplant.sharepoint.com/sites/Clinical/SitePages/Clinical%20Audit.aspx>

Leaflet developed from an original idea by UHBT NHS Trust Clinical Audit Department.

Leaflet No. 5

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Developing Aims and Objectives for Clinical Audit

This leaflet looks at creating focus and clarity for meaningful audit outcomes

Once an audit topic has been chosen (see **Identifying a Clinical Audit Topic leaflet**), it is essential to develop clear aims and objectives. This keeps the audit focused and achievable, avoids overloading it with unrelated issues, and ensures meaningful results.

What Are Aims and Objectives?

<p style="text-align: center;">Aims</p> <p>Broad statements of intent describing what you want to achieve.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Objectives</p> <p>Specific, measurable statements describing how you will show the aim has been met.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Examples of Aims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure blood is only taken from suitable donors • Ensure blood given to patients is safe • Ensure sample turnaround times are acceptable 	<p style="text-align: center;">Examples of Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that blood donors are accepted according to Donor Selection Guidelines. • Ensure that blood donors are deferred according to Donor Selection Guidelines.

Maxwell's Six Dimensions of Quality

(Maxwell R.J. 1984 *Quality Assessment in Health*, BMJ 288 1470-1)

These can help decide what to measure to show aims have been met:

1. **Access** – Who can use the service and who should be using it?
e.g. ensure all potential donors can access a blood donor session
2. **Equity** – Is access to care fair and equal according to need?
e.g. do all patients have access to therapeutic apheresis services?
3. **(Social) Acceptability** – Do users and patients agree with the intervention?
e.g. determine if information leaflets are acceptable to donors
4. **Effectiveness (for individuals)** – Is the intervention delivered correctly and does it improve outcomes?
e.g. change practice if treatment of re-bleeds is not effective
5. **Relevance (to needs)** – How relevant is the treatment to the patient's condition?
e.g. ensure that all transfusions are relevant
6. **Efficiency and Economy** – Are desired outcomes obtained with minimal effort, expense and waste?
e.g. improve the efficiency of the laboratory process

Define the Terms You Use

Ensure everyone involved understands exactly what each term means to avoid ambiguity.

E.g. If the objective is “**Ensure all red cell transfusions are effective**”, clarify:

- What is meant by Red Cell Transfusion (all products or specific groups?)
- Which patients are included (all or specific patient groups?)
- How **effective** is defined (e.g. post-transfusion haemoglobin increase, symptom improvement?)

Why Clarity Matters

Clear aims and objectives prevent confusion over data collection or standards used. They make it easier to discuss results, develop recommendations, and drive improvements. **Remember-** Think carefully about what is being measured – effective transfusions that raise haemoglobin levels are not the same as appropriate transfusions.

- The Clinical Audit Protocol/Planning Template (**FRM3720**) requires aims and objectives before audit support can be considered.