

Draft Assessment and Rating Instrument

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care

Please note: This document is a draft only, developed for the purposes of the current phase of the assessment and rating process (phase two). It will be reviewed and refined based on the outcomes of phase two and also to ensure it aligns with national legislation, and regulations prior to finalisation.

This *Draft Assessment and Rating Instrument* is produced for discussion purposes only. It is not intended to be, and does not represent, a finalised statement of the policy of the Commonwealth of Australia, and does not constitute professional advice for any particular purpose. Because the circumstances of readers may vary greatly, this material is not intended to provide specific guidance for particular circumstances and it should not be relied on as a basis for any decision to take action or not take action on any matter which it covers.

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Revised draft - Phase two

Assessment and rating process

The assessment and rating process includes consideration of the service history and the Quality Improvement Plan together with a visit to the service. During the visit the assessor(s) will observe and discuss practice and sight supporting documentation. After the visit they will rate the service against the National Quality Standard (NQS) based on this evidence.

The NQS is comprised of 65 elements, 23 standards and 7 quality areas. Each of the standards in the NQS contains a number of elements. Each standard is rated as Advanced, National Quality Standard, Foundation or Unsatisfactory. The assessment of the elements contributes to the rating of each standard and the rating of each standard in a quality area determines the rating of that quality area. The overall service rating is determined by the rating for each of the quality areas. There may be a number of services with an overall rating of Advanced who believe they exceed the Advanced rating and may apply to the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) to be assessed for a rating of Excellent.

In effect, the service must first meet or exceed all the elements in the NQS to receive a rating of National Quality Standard or Advanced. The rating of Advanced is dependent upon the number of standards rated as Advanced and the quality areas in which the rating is achieved. Where a service does not meet all the elements in the NQS the service will receive a rating of Foundation unless it does not meet an element in a way that poses an actual or potential risk to a child or children's safety, welfare or wellbeing. It will then be rated as Unsatisfactory.

Assessment and rating - Unsatisfactory to Advanced

Rating Level →	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Foundation *</i>	<i>National quality standard</i>	<i>Advanced</i>
Rating Criteria ↓				
Assessing the element and rating the standard	One or more elements are not met, the service does not meet the standard and this poses a risk to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children	One or more elements are not met; service does not meet the standard.	All elements are met, the service meets the standard. (Usual practice of the service meets the standard)	All elements are met or exceeded, the service exceeds the standard. (The service consistently meets or exceeds the standard)
Rating the quality area	A rating of Unsatisfactory for any standard in the quality area.	A rating of Foundation for any standard with no rating of Unsatisfactory for any standard in the quality area.	A rating of at least National Quality Standard for all standards in the quality area.	A rating of Advanced for 60% or more of the standards in the quality area.
Overall rating	A rating of Unsatisfactory for one or more quality areas.	A rating of Foundation for one or more quality areas. The service is working towards a rating of National Quality Standard.	A rating of at least National Quality Standard for all quality areas.	A rating of at least National Quality Standard for all quality areas and Advanced for at least four quality areas, with a minimum of two from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational program and practice *** • Relationships with children • Collaborative partnerships with families and communities • Leadership and service management.
Frequency of assessment	Close monitoring with consideration of service closure.	Full assessment and rating in one year.	Full assessment and rating in 2 years.	Full assessment and rating in 3 years.
Assessment process	Assessed and rated by Regulatory Authority.	Assessed and rated by Regulatory Authority.*	Assessed and rated by Regulatory Authority.	Assessed and rated by Regulatory Authority.

*** Foundation Level**

There are three categories of services that will be identified as Foundation:

1. Services who have been **assessed and rated** against the NQS and are rated as Foundation. These services may continue to operate whilst working towards meeting the NQS (they may meet or exceed the NQS in some standards and/or quality areas)
2. **New services** who have been assessed against **some** elements of the National Quality Standard (before commencing to operate) and have been given approval to operate.
3. **Existing services** transitioning to the new system that have not been assessed and rated against the National Quality Standard.

**** National Quality Standard**

Services with an overall rating of NQS may be Advanced in a number of quality areas.

*****Ratings Criteria for Advanced in Educational Program and Practice**

From 2013, to achieve Advanced in the quality area educational program and practice services (other than Outside School Hours Care services) with children attending in the year before full-time school must provide, or provide access to, a pre-school program for 15 hours per week, for 40 weeks per year, delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher.

To achieve an overall rating of Advanced the service must be rated Advanced in four of the seven Quality Areas with at least two coming from Quality Area 1, 5, 6 or 7 (as highlighted in the table below).

Quality Area Rating					
Quality Area 1	Educational program and practice	U	F	S	A
Quality Area 2	Children's health and safety				
Quality Area 3	Physical environment				
Quality Area 4	Staffing arrangements				
Quality Area 5	Relationships with children				
Quality Area 6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities				
Quality Area 7	Leadership and service management				
Overall rating					

Service details

Name of Service

Type of Service

Location

Street

Suburb

Postcode

State or Territory

Contact Details

Telephone

Mobile

Email

Approved Provider

Approved Supervisor

Name

Title

Visit date

Date

Arrival

Departure

Visit date

Date

Arrival

Departure

Assessors

Name

Title

Organisation

Name

Title

Organisation

Feedback

Yes

No

Date provided

Copy Attached

Yes

No

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

**Quality
Improvement
Plan**

Standard 2.1 rating U F S A

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

**Quality
Improvement
Plan**

Standard 2.2 rating U F S A

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

Quality
Improvement
Plan

Standard 2.3 rating U F S A

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

Standard 7.3: Management and administrative systems enable the effective provision of a quality service.

	Unsatisfactory	Foundation	National Quality Standard	Advanced
7.3.1	A child or children's safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk as the result of failure of administrative systems or communication channels.	Administrative systems and communication channels are evident.	Administrative systems and communication channels are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service.	Advanced administrative systems and communication channels are well established and maintained ensuring highly effective operation of the service and provide a focus for continuous improvement.
7.3.2	A child or children's safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk as the result of failure to effectively document policies and procedures, to make them available or to carry them out.	Documented policies and procedures are available at the service and are mainly observed.	Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed regularly.	Service practices are based on effectively documented policies and procedures that are available at the service and reviewed and evaluated regularly in partnership with educators, coordinators, staff and families.
7.3.3	A child or children's safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk as the result of failure to store records and information or ensure confidentiality or to keep records and information available at the service.	Records and information are available at the service and efforts are made to keep them current and confidential.	Records and information are stored to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.	Records and information are stored to ensure confidentiality, are available at the service and reviewed and evaluated regularly in partnership with educators, coordinators, staff and families and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.
7.3.4	A child or children's safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk as the result of failure to arrange appropriate governance to manage the service.	Governance arrangements are in place.	Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to manage the service.	Well developed and appropriate governance arrangements contribute to the effective management of the service.
7.3.5	A child or children's safety, welfare or wellbeing is at risk as the result of failure to notify the authority/ies responsible for administering the standard of any relevant changes.	The authority/ies responsible for administering the standard is/are notified about most relevant changes.	The authority/ies responsible for administering the standard is/are notified about any relevant changes.	The authority/ies responsible for administering the standard is/are promptly notified about any relevant changes. Information provided by the authority/ies contributes to the continuous improvement of the service.

Element

Evidence

