

NQF assessment and rating

The Australian Government has released information regarding the assessment and rating process for the **National Quality Framework (NQF)**

The first requirement of the assessment and rating process is the preparation of a self assessed Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) which identifies the service's strengths and areas for improvement.

This will be a busy time for services as they engage with the new National Law and Regulations but from 1 January 2012 existing services transitioning into the system will have at least four months to submit their QIP. During this time no assessment visits will occur. The first assessment visits are expected to commence in June 2012 and services will be given notice of upcoming assessment. It is anticipated that those services scheduled for assessment in June 2012 will be contacted by the Department in April. Support will be provided to services to help them prepare for the assessment and rating process. Priority may be given to education and care services currently covered by the National Childcare Accreditation Council but which are not yet accredited or are due for accreditation in 2012.

Further information including the key steps in the assessment and rating process and FAQ are available in DEEWR's NQF Assessment and Rating Process fact sheet. It is anticipated that a range of fact sheets and FAQs will be available for the launch of the National Regulations providing more detail on what services can expect and will need to do in preparation for 1 January 2012.

Diary Note: Information Sessions for the NQF Regulations

The Department of Education and Training will hold Information Sessions around Queensland on release of the final National Regulations for the NQF

The Information Sessions will provide a comprehensive understanding of the new regulations and explore key changes for Queensland specific to long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and kindergarten services. There will also be discussion on the transitional provisions for services and steps to prepare for 1 January 2012. It is anticipated that sessions will be held from October to November 2011. Details will be confirmed closer to release of the Regulations.

Event details and registrations will be available at: <http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood>.

Nominated Supervisor? Certified Supervisor? educational leader? NQF terminology explained

The National Quality Framework (NQF) uses a range of terms when describing leadership positions within early childhood services.

Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisor, educational leader and early childhood teacher all refer to different requirements with different timeframes for implementation. To help services understand these changes we've pulled together a handy FAQ. To learn more, view the information under the 'Staffing requirements' heading at: <http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/office/national/faq.html>



Blueprint launched for school-age care

The *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care* has been released with the aim of delivering nationally consistent and quality school-age care programs across Australia. It is a key component of the National Quality Framework (NQF) which commences in 2012.

As the first national framework for school-age care, *My Time, Our Place* (for school-age care children, 6 to 12 years) aligns with the Early Years Learning Framework (which is focussed on children, birth to 5 years). Services delivering education and care to school-age children under the Education and Care Services National Law will be required to implement this framework from 1 January 2012.

My Time, Our Place will support and guide educators to provide opportunities for school-age children to engage in a range of leisure and play-based experiences across outside school hours care and relevant long day care and family day care settings. It provides the blueprint to help educators meet the educational program and practice requirements under the National Quality Standard. This includes guiding educators in their program decision-making and assisting in planning, implementing

and evaluating quality. It is designed to inspire conversations, improve communication and provide a common language about children's play, leisure and learning.

The Australian Government will shortly deliver copies of the framework to school-age care services. Download from http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Policy_Agenda/Documents/AgeCareinAus.pdf

National Quality Framework: Governing body announced

The Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments have announced the establishment of the Board for the new national authority for early childhood education and care – the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

ACECQA will monitor the implementation and management of the National Quality Framework (NQF) from 1 January 2012, to ensure national improvements to and consistency of early childhood education and care across Australia.

The ACECQA Board will be led by Ms Rachel Hunter as Chair and supported by a 13 member Board consisting of State and Territory representatives with a range of expertise from across Australia. This includes Queensland's Executive Director of early childhood policy within the Department of Education and Training, Anne Reddell.

From 2012, ACECQA will perform a range of functions, such as:

- determining qualification requirements for educators including assessing equivalence of qualifications
- determining qualification requirements for authorised officers
- publishing assessment ratings, guides and resources to assist services to meet the NQS
- undertaking research and continually evaluating the progress of the NQF across Australia
- managing a national register of approvals and national data on assessment and regulation of services.

For further information about ACECQA, see the media statement at: <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Pages/default.aspx>