

Educators

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 7.2.1 and understood continuous improvement involves regularly monitoring and reviewing performance to guide planning and improve quality.

This element covers all the elements in the NQS and if you use the element indicators, you should be able to solve many problems you experience in practice.

What is continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is a simple two-part process. First, you discover by self-assessment where your practice is compared to the NQS guide. If your practice is meeting or exceeding what the guide says, you write it as a strength in your QIP.

The second part of the process requires you to improve your practice if you're not doing what the guide says. You plan to improve, implement the plan and hopefully you do improve. Again, all of this is written into your QIP in the 'improvement' section. When you have improved by implementing the plan, you can assess whether this is now a strength and whether to include it in the strength section of the QIP. The main concept of the NQS is self-assessment against the NQS Elements.

How does Centre Support assist you in this improvement process?

Everything Centre Support provides in the weekly professional development (PD) helps you meet and exceed the NQS. The weekly documents become an important part of the evidence which proves to the assessor you're doing the two-part process of assessing yourself, then improving if required to meet or exceed the element.

Each educator MUST be involved

Each educator who meaningfully completes the weekly PD will be continuously improving. The PD is set out to ensure the Centre and its educators are systematically reflecting and assessing themselves against each element. There are case studies to make you think about your practice, and questions to ensure you don't miss anything required by the NQS.

Educators Eliza and Tamara said, *"Many educators that engage in Centre Support's weekly PD will continuously improve their practices as they grow from being average educators to incredible educators."*

Many educators reflect on and discuss their practice to improve it. An important question is, do you celebrate the little improvements you're making every day? Implementing small changes can significantly change the way educators, children and families feel and how happy they are. Educators feel a sense of achievement by continuously improving. So remember - don't be so hard on yourself. Many little improvements that you make every day can be linked back to the NQS. Celebrate the little wins you have as improvements.

What issues or areas can you apply the two-step continuous improvement to? For example:

Problem to improve upon – a child is not engaged with other children or the activities.

Aim: Encourage children's inclusion and participation
What to do: Go to the NQS element that could help eg for this example Element 3.2.1 Inclusive environment.

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Select just one point from the element that could help guide or change your practice.

Children

- *exploring relationships with living things and observing, noticing and responding to change (page 196 NQF Guide)*

Reflect and think about the point in relation to the child. *“Kayden loves bugs and natural things. Thinking now about when he doesn’t want to join in, we are not including his love for bugs.”*

Practice change – Kayden helped us build a ‘bug hotel’. Outdoor activities now end with a quick check of what’s living there. What a difference that’s made! Kayden now comes up with lots of bug related activities, and is happy to participate in others.

Problem to improve upon – many families are moving to our town to escape city high prices. They come from diverse multicultural backgrounds and don’t know other families in town.

Aim: Better integrate the diverse cultures of children, families, and the community

What to do: Go to the NQS element that could help, eg for this example Element 6.1.3 Families are supported.

Select just one point from the element that could help guide or change your practice.

Assessors may discuss

- *how families are sensitively supported and encouraged to access local community services and resources that may be relevant to them (page 265 NQF Guide)*

Reflect and think about the point in relation to the new families. *“Some families wouldn’t know anyone here, and the children wouldn’t be invited for play dates.”*

Practice change – We’ve set up regular Saturday morning playdates in a local park. We provide stickers so the families can write their name on them and introduce themselves to each other. This was a hit and from here we have learnt so much about other cultures.

From the list below, select a point you could aim to improve with your everyday practice:

- connect children with their community
- build partnerships with families

- discover and build on children’s ideas and interests
- improve your critical reflection skills
- improve your learning documentation eg to show evidence of the assessment and planning cycle
- improve your verbal and written communication skills
- set up environments which spark children’s interest and look amazing
- manage children’s behaviour
- use routines and transitions as learning opportunities
- feel valued and part of a team.

What problem needs to be improved upon?

Aim (selected from the above points)

What NQS Element could help you to think about the problem differently?

Select just one point from the NQS Element

Reflect and think about the point in relation to the problem.

Create a practice change

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The EYLF and MTOP says “Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives.” Pick one of the following reflection points to complete the table below:

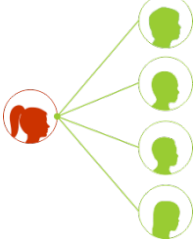
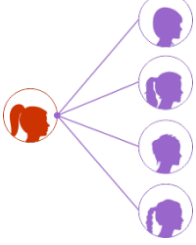
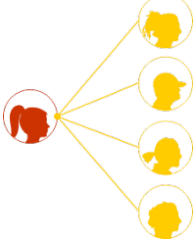
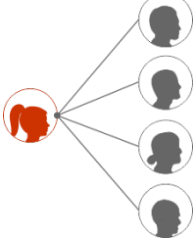
- Do you objectively assess your practice against the MTOP? (related to improvement example)
- Do you explain changes in practice or service operations to families from a quality improvement perspective?
- Do you consistently support team members to improve their practice?

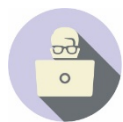
Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
<p>a child</p>	Sometimes we get to learn more about what we like, and other times we have to learn about things like road safety and healthy eating.	After several educators asked how they're supposed to show whether or not they're implementing the MTOP, the EL ran a coaching session explaining how to use the indicators under the learning outcomes in the MTOP books ie the indicators on the left show what children know and can do, while those on the right show how educators can extend learning. Educators can use these ideas and phrases when planning and documenting children's learning.
<p>an educator</p>	How am I supposed to show whether or not I'm implementing the MTOP?	
<p>your families</p>	My child's having a great time at the Centre. It's not like school though where educators have to follow a curriculum is it?	
<p>theorist and current research</p>	<i>“Working in collaboration with children and in partnership with families, educators use the Outcomes to guide their planning for children's wellbeing and learning.” (MTOP)</i>	



The EYLF and MTOP says “Critical reflection involves closely examining all aspects of events and experiences from different perspectives.” Pick one of the following reflection points to complete the table below:

- Do you objectively assess your practice against the MTOP?
- Do you explain changes in practice or service operations to families from a quality improvement perspective?
- Do you consistently support team members to improve their practice?

Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
 <p>a child</p>		
 <p>an educator</p>		
 <p>your families</p>		
 <p>theorist and current research</p>		



Complete your QIP

The information you write below can go directly into your QIP or Self-Assessment Tool (SAT) (NSW ONLY)

Instructions

For a MEETING QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)	For Exceeding the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
<i>Please give an example of the way you've passed on information from families, children or the community that could be used to improve service outcomes or practices.</i>	<i>Please discuss how you regularly and actively contribute to the service Quality Improvement Plan or Self-Assessment Tool, and how this process drives continuous improvement in service quality and enhances outcomes for children and families.</i>
<i>Please explain how you self-assess your practice against the MTOP.</i>	<i>Please give an example of the way service manager/leaders implemented change in a sensitive and collaborative way, including clearly communicating the reason for the change.</i>
<i>Please discuss how a culture of reflection contributes to continuous improvement.</i>	<i>Please give an example of a community partnership that supports your professional development and improves outcomes for children and families.</i>
If you cannot answer these questions above the you are not meeting. This means you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice	

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Checklist

Why are you doing the checklist?

The practices identified in the checklist are what the assessor needs to see you do so they can check you're 'meeting the NQS.' If you embed all the things in the checklist, then you are meeting the Element 7.2.1. If there's something on the checklist that you're not doing, then you need to either adjust your practice to do it, or ask for help and training to do what's on the checklist ie work with your educational leader or room leader who should teach/coach you how to do it.

The checklist keys to use.

E = Embedded I do that **ALL** the time

K = I know I need to do that, but I don't do it all the time

T = Please teach me how to do it or improve my understanding of why I need to do it.

Name Educator 1	
Name Educator 2	
Name Educator 3	
Name Educator 4	
Name Educator 5	

Do you participate in regular reviews or critical reflections to assess:	ED1	ED2	ED3	ED4	ED5
• to what extent your practice meets or exceeds the NQS					
• how well you implement the MTOP					
• children's learning outcomes against the learning outcomes in the MTOP					
• to what extent your practice aligns with the Service Philosophy					
• feedback and complaints from children and families					
• your performance against the requirements and expectations in your position description					
Do you collect and use information from a range of sources when reviewing or reflecting on quality?					
Do you share the results of your reviews and reflections, and regularly contribute to the Quality Improvement Plan in the Service QIP					