



We can solve problems with practice with the help of the NQS



The NQS can guide our critical reflections



The NQS is what we assess against to write our QIPs



The NQS is what assessors assess us against to write their A&R report



Families can make a choice based on our NQS rating

How are the National Quality Standards used by stakeholders?



Educators

4.2.1 Professional collaboration - Management, educators and staff work with mutual respect and collaboratively, and challenge and learn from each other, recognising each other's strengths and skills.

Looking at the element in detail - A service reviewed what the NQF Guide said about element 4.2.1 and understood professional collaboration involves:

- co-operatively working towards common goals
- open communication, information sharing, joint planning and problem solving
- respecting and using diverse viewpoints, skills, experiences and backgrounds.



Solving Problems with the NQS

Problem the element can solve – educators think professional collaboration involves a major investment of time.

Aim: Educators understand they can meet this element during their everyday practice.

What to do: Go to NQS element 4.2.1

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

Assessors may discuss

- *the strategies the service has in place to facilitate communication and reflection between educators (page 223 NQF Guide).*

Reflect and think about the point in relation to daily professional collaboration.

Practice change – The EL decided to hold 5 minute room/group meetings in the mornings and asked

Week 36, 14 November - 18 November 2022 – 4.2.1 Professional collaboration

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questions which prompted reflection on individual children, educator practices or Service operations. This invariably led to a team member offering ideas or advice on different approaches or potential changes. The EL also provided their perspective, and offered to research issues if needed.

Reflection/Evaluation – This helped team members work together more, and opened their eyes to the strengths or experience of fellow team members. Often this experience came from outside the ECEC sector eg one educator previously worked for a catering company started leading our cooking activities. Another educator who'd worked for a cleaning company suggested improvements to our cleaning kits and how we stored things.

Problem to improve upon – educators view professional collaboration as something managers should be doing – not them.

Aim: Educators understand the importance of 'grassroots' feedback and collaboration. They are the ones directly working with the children.

What to do: Go to NQS element 4.2.1

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

Assessors may observe

- *educators sharing their knowledge and discussing and reflecting on the needs of particular children and families (page 222 NQF Guide).*

Reflect and think about the point in relation to professional collaboration involving educators.

Practice change – The EL used several real examples from the Centre to show the importance of educators sharing their knowledge and skills eg one educator explained how she thought a child may have auditory processing deficits, and what a difference using visual cues had made. She demonstrated these, which led to all educators using consistent communication practices with the child, and improved learning outcomes.

Reflection/Evaluation – Educators can keep important information to themselves, often unintentionally. It's up to all team members to be open to sharing with and learning from other educators. This shift in values and beliefs will happen faster if we sometimes highlight examples where sharing information and supporting each other at the 'grassroots' level has really helped.

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From the list below, select a point and explore how you could improve the way you collaborate with other educators and staff when:

- you're having trouble managing a child's learning or behaviour
- you've implemented successful strategies to help a particular child
- a new educator joins the team
- you come across an issue for the first time and aren't sure what to do
- you see something that could be improved.

What problem needs to be improved upon?

Aim (selected from the above points)

Select just one point from the NQS Element

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

Create a practice change

Reflect on or evaluate the change



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 there's something on the checklist that you're not doing, you need to adjust your practice to do it, or ask for help and training to implement it ie work with your educational/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	

Practices

Do you encourage other team members to share their ideas and knowledge, regardless of their experience, culture, background etc?					
Do you share your knowledge and skills with team members, including those based on current recognised approaches and research and information gained from professional development?					
Are you always professional and respectful when sharing information eg never engage in derogatory remarks about practice with team member or others?					
Do you know the particular strengths of team members and use them when you can?					
Are you open to receiving coaching/guidance about better ways of doing things or recognised best practice no matter how long you have been working in a Service or sector?					
Do you willingly support new team members and relief staff, including those who may not have your skills, knowledge or understanding of service practices, so they feel valued and included?					
Do you share tasks and responsibilities and promptly help team members who need extra assistance?					
Do you regularly reflect on the needs of children and families, including ensuring all children are included and supported, and share your ideas with team members?					
Do you follow a consistent process for documenting reflections on children's and families' needs?					

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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:

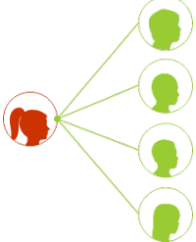
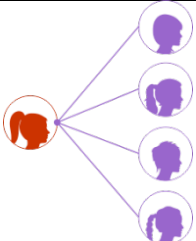
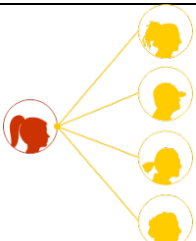
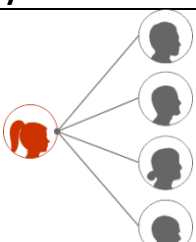
- How could you help casual or relief educators feel more valued? (eg see QIP/SAT improvement example)
- Does valuable information about the needs of particular children or families always get shared between educators, or between managers and staff members? How could this be improved?
- Is there anything stopping the particular skills or strengths of some educators from being (fully) used to strengthen learning outcomes? What changes could you suggest?

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>	I don't know this person. Who's looking after me?	<p>Following feedback from several room leaders about the impact of casual staff, the NS asked for ideas on how they could better support relief staff and casuals and make them feel more included and valued. Suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Room/Group Leader asking about their hobbies and interests at the start of the shift • Keeping this information on file and accessing it next time the casual returns • Room/Group Leader ensuring these interests and strengths are used if possible during the shift • Room/Group Leader and educators introducing educator to families and children – and doing this each time they work at the centre if necessary eg ‘you remember Miss Katia – she’s worked here before....’ • Inviting casual/relief staff to service functions eg Xmas parties – but also events at the Service eg visits from community services
<p>an educator</p>	I wish I knew more about the children. It would make things easier (relief educator).	
<p>your families</p>	I feel like I should know more about this educator. She's been filling in here occasionally for a while now.	
<p>theorist and current research</p>	Assessors may observe educators, co-ordinators and staff members using strategies that assist casual and relief educators to feel a sense of belonging to the team and service (NQS Guide page 222)	



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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

Instructions If you are happy with a Meeting rating you do not need to answer the Exceeding questions. Note if you can't answer all meeting questions you are not meeting the element, and you need to create an improvement plan and make changes to your practice.

If you are striving for an Exceeding rating, we suggest you answer all meeting and exceeding questions. You can copy your answers into your QIP, or SAT (NSW ONLY).

For a MEETING QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)	For Exceeding the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
<i>Please give an example showing the educational leader supporting you or your team to improve practice, for example, implementing current recognised research or theories.</i>	Embedded Practice <i>Please give an example showing how you recognise and regularly make use of other educators' strengths.</i>
<i>Please give an example showing how your team encourages and respects different points of view.</i>	Critical Reflection <i>Please give an example showing you or your team reflecting on your pedagogical knowledge and the delivery of the curriculum. (see QIP/SAT Strength)</i>
<i>Please give an example of educators in your team sharing information and reflecting on how best to meet the needs of individual children and families.</i>	Engagement with families and community <i>Please discuss how all educators recognise diversity as a strength and work together to promote a culture of inclusiveness and sense of belonging for all children, families and the community, including those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.</i>