



**First step:** We must ensure the Law and Regulations are always met. **Second step:** then we look at the NQS and work through the process of meeting the element.



## Law & Regs

There are no Regulations related to Element 7.1.1 Service philosophy and practice. However, the Guide to the NQF says (p. 286) that the Philosophy reflects the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework which can be found in the **National Law Section 3 Objectives and guiding principles**.

The guiding principles of the national education and care services quality framework are as follows—

- (a) that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount;
- (b) that children are successful, competent and capable learners;
- (c) that the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie this Law;
- (d) that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued;
- (e) that the role of parents and families is respected and supported;
- (f) that best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services.

Describe how you are meeting one of the points from above.

The following section will show you exactly what to do to ensure your practice is meeting.

## Why is the element important?

Element 7.1.1 **Service philosophy and purpose** – *A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.*:

1. underpins the decisions, policies, and daily practices of the service
2. reflects a shared understanding of the role of the service among staff, children, families, and the community
3. guides educators' pedagogy, planning and practice when delivering the educational program.

## What could potentially go wrong if educators didn't do the above?

### Disruption in Learning Due to Inconsistent Practices:

Without a guiding philosophy, educators might adopt varied teaching methods and interaction styles with children, leading to inconsistency. This inconsistency can create confusion and disrupt the learning environment. For instance, children might struggle to adapt to differing disciplinary approaches or teaching styles, impacting their ability to establish routines and feel secure.

### Deviation from Service Goals Due to Misaligned Practices:

If educators are not aligned with the service philosophy, they might inadvertently focus on personal goals that do not match the service's overall objectives. This misalignment can lead to a disjointed approach to early learning, hindering the achievement of key outcomes. For example, if the service philosophy emphasises inclusivity but an educator prioritises competitive activities, it could undermine the inclusive environment the service strives to create.

**3. Compromised Teamwork and Collaboration:** A shared understanding of the service philosophy fosters teamwork among educators. Lack of engagement with

the philosophy can lead to reduced collaboration and poor communication. This might manifest in disjointed lesson planning or inconsistent responses to children's needs, impacting the effectiveness of the service and the quality of care and education provided.

**Reduced Focus on Child-Centred Learning:** A core element of many service philosophies is child-centred learning. Without using the philosophy as a guide, educators might lean towards a more rigid, standardised approach. This can restrict opportunities for tailored learning experiences that respond to individual children's interests and needs. For example, an educator might persist with a pre-planned activity despite children showing more interest in a different subject, thereby limiting engagement and exploration.

**Difficulties in Engaging Families:** If educators do not reflect and communicate the service's philosophy, establishing meaningful relationships with families can be challenging. Families might feel less connected to the service and less involved in their child's education, leading to missed opportunities for collaborative support. For example, if family participation is a key component of the philosophy, but educators do not actively involve families, this could create a disconnect.

**Loss of Unique Service Identity:** The service philosophy often defines the unique identity and purpose of a centre. Ignoring this philosophy can lead to a loss of distinct character, making it difficult to stand out among other early childhood services. For instance, if a service is known for its nature-based learning philosophy but fails to implement it, it could lose its unique appeal to families seeking that specific educational approach.



You must practice

examples.

**It's very important to make sure your philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations. To do this look at the below practice**

**Establishing Consistent Practices:** Educators can achieve consistency in their teaching and interactions with children by actively participating in professional development and team meetings focused on the service philosophy. Regular discussions on how to practically apply the philosophy can deepen educators' understanding of its key principles and their integration into daily routines with children. Establishing clear expectations and guidelines rooted in the philosophy can foster a harmonious and secure learning environment, supporting children in establishing routines and feeling safe.

**Aligning with Service Goals:** Educators can foster a shared understanding of the service philosophy by talking with colleagues. Engaging in conversations about the philosophy's relevance and impact can help align individual efforts with the service's overarching vision. Collaborative planning sessions, where educators collectively design activities that reflect the philosophy, can enhance alignment with service goals and desired outcomes for children.

**Promoting Collaboration and Teamwork:** Educators can nurture a collaborative culture through regular reflective practices, such as peer observations, joint planning sessions, and sharing constructive feedback. Recognising and utilising each other's strengths and expertise in applying the service philosophy can strengthen teamwork. Professional development and team-building activities that highlight the importance of collaboration can further bolster a united approach among staff.

**Focusing on Child-Centred Learning:** Educators should actively observe and engage with children, using the philosophy as a framework to tailor learning experiences to individual interests, strengths, and needs. Flexible curriculum planning and providing opportunities for child-led learning can ensure active engagement and development, keeping children at the heart of educational experiences.

**Enhancing Family Engagement:** Educators can live out the service philosophy by involving families in their children's educational journey. Regular interactions through parent-teacher meetings, newsletters, and family events can help families grasp the philosophy and its influence on their child's experiences at the centre. Inviting families to contribute their insights and ideas can forge meaningful partnerships that enrich the children's learning environment.

**Reinforcing Service Identity:** Educators can actively contribute to defining the service's identity by upholding the core values of the philosophy. Showcasing the service's uniqueness through cultural events, traditions, and engagement with the local community can highlight its distinct character. Consistently aligning practices with the philosophy and communicating its significance to families and the community can affirm the service's reputation for quality early childhood education.

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you are doing well? Describe your practice in detail so it can go directly into your QIP or SAT (NSW only).

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you need to work on? Describe how you could improve your practice.