



NQF Snapshot

Q3 2019



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority™

November 2019

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Overview

NQF Snapshot Q3 2019 is ACECQA's 27th national report on children's education and care services operating under the National Quality Framework (NQF).

It provides analysis and information on the profile of the sector and the quality ratings of services against the National Quality Standard (NQS).

A revised version of the NQS commenced on 1 February 2018. The number of quality standards has reduced from 18 to 15, and the number of quality elements has reduced from 58 to 40.

The changes streamline the NQS and reduce overlap between elements and standards. Analysis at the standard and element level uses quality ratings against the 2018 NQS only, while analysis at the overall and quality area level uses all current quality ratings against both the 2012 and 2018 NQS.

An [interactive online version of the Snapshot](#), which includes additional analysis, is available on the ACECQA website.

The data presented in this Snapshot was taken from the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS) on 1 October 2019 for the period ending 30 September 2019.

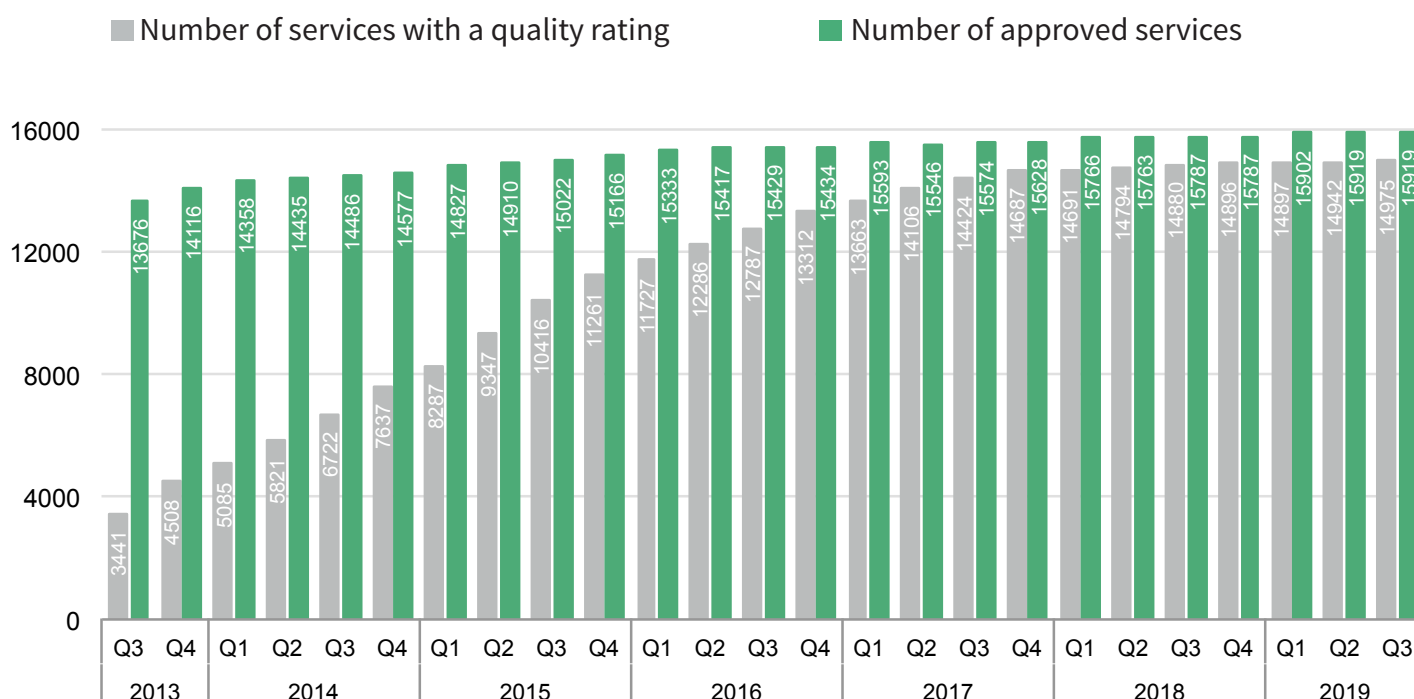
Due to rounding, individual percentages in the tables and figures may not add up to 100%.



Snapshot highlights

15,919	children's education and care services approved to operate under the NQF
14,975 (94%)	services with a quality rating
11,851 (79%)	services with a quality rating of Meeting NQS or above
7268	providers approved to operate
5932 (82%)	providers approved to operate only one service
48	services rated Excellent by ACECQA ¹
9037	quality rating reassessments completed
65%	of services rated Working Towards NQS improved their overall quality rating at reassessment
5704 (36%)	services with a quality rating against the 2018 NQS

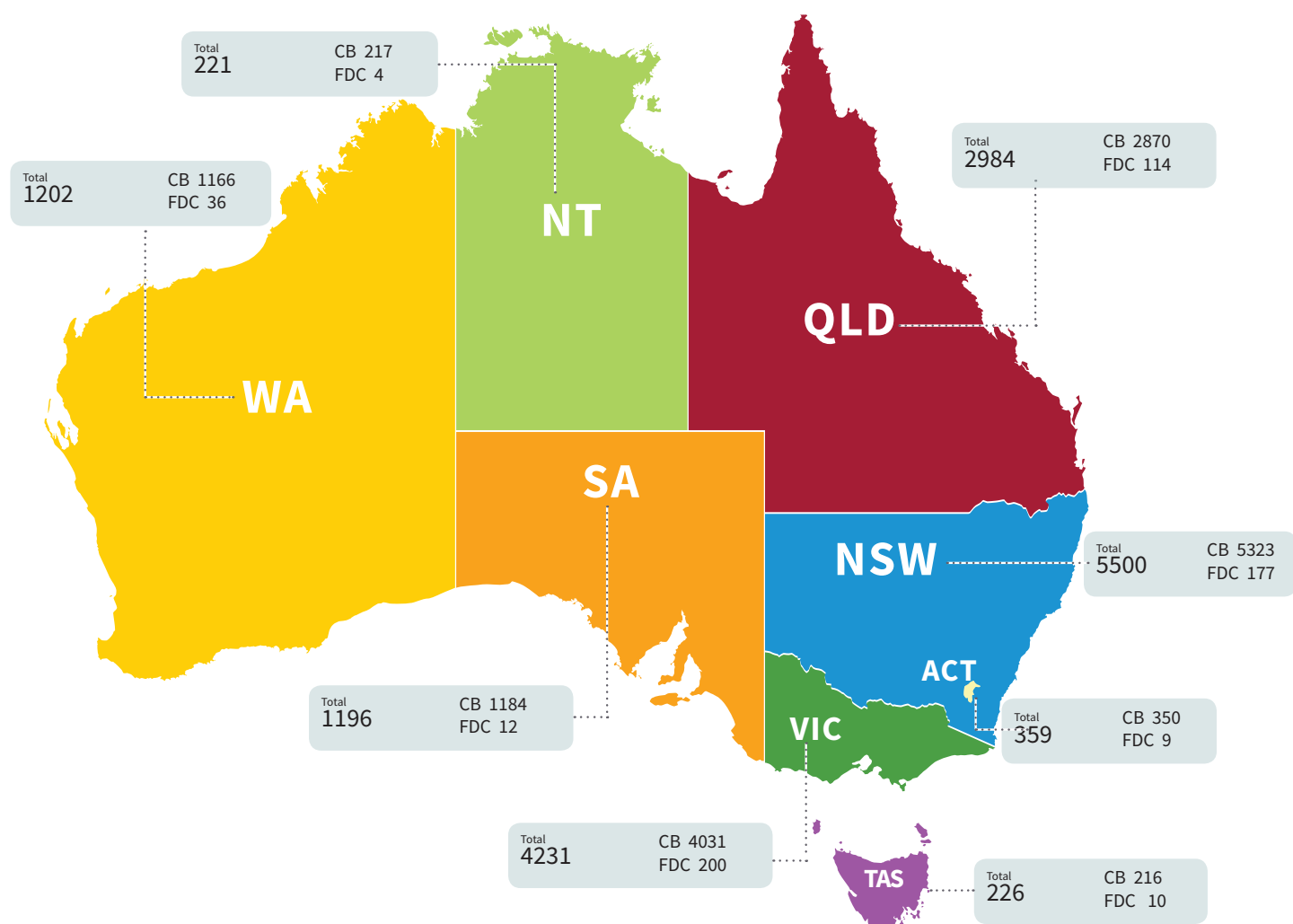
Figure 1: Number of approved services and number of services with a quality rating by quarter



¹ The Excellent rating is awarded for a period of three years. Unless a reapplication for the Excellent rating is received, a service's rating will revert back to Exceeding NQS after this three year period. The Snapshot includes the current number of Excellent rated services.

Profile of the sector

Figure 2: Number of approved services by jurisdiction and service type



Total Centre-based (CB) ¹
15,357 (96%)

2%
Increase on Q3 2018

Total Family day care (FDC) ²
562 (4%)

22%
Decrease on Q3 2018

Total
15,919

1%
Increase on Q3 2018

¹ A centre-based service is an education and care service other than a family day care service. This includes most long day care, preschool and outside school hours care services that are delivered at a centre. It does not include preschools in Tasmania or Western Australia out of scope of the NQF, as well as other services that aren't regulated under the National Law.

² A family day care service is an education and care service delivered through a network of educators operating from residences and other approved venues. They are sometimes known as family day care schemes and they are administered and supported by central coordination units.

Figure 3: Proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above by overall rating and quality area

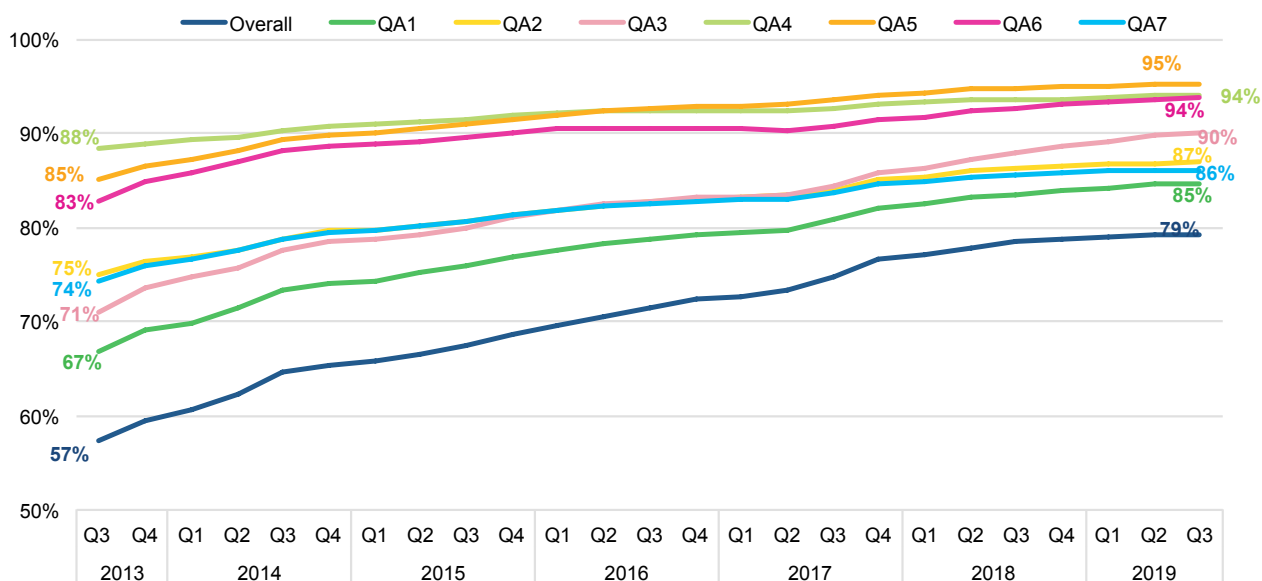


Figure 4: Proportion of services rated Exceeding NQS or above by overall rating and quality area

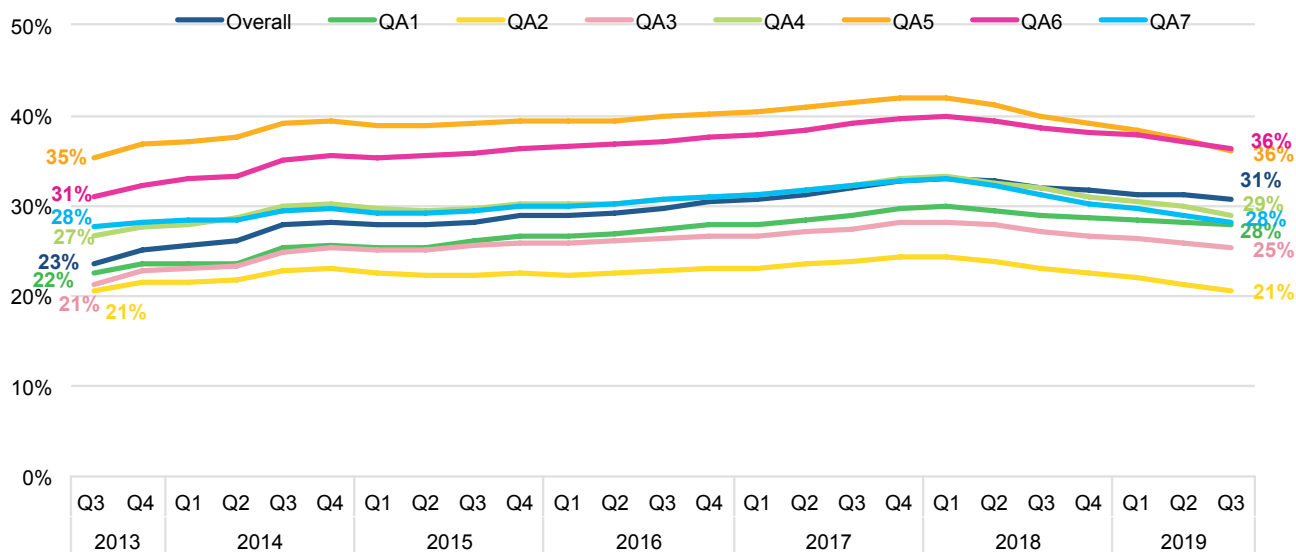


Figure 5: Proportion of services by service sub-type and jurisdiction ^{1,2,3,4,5}

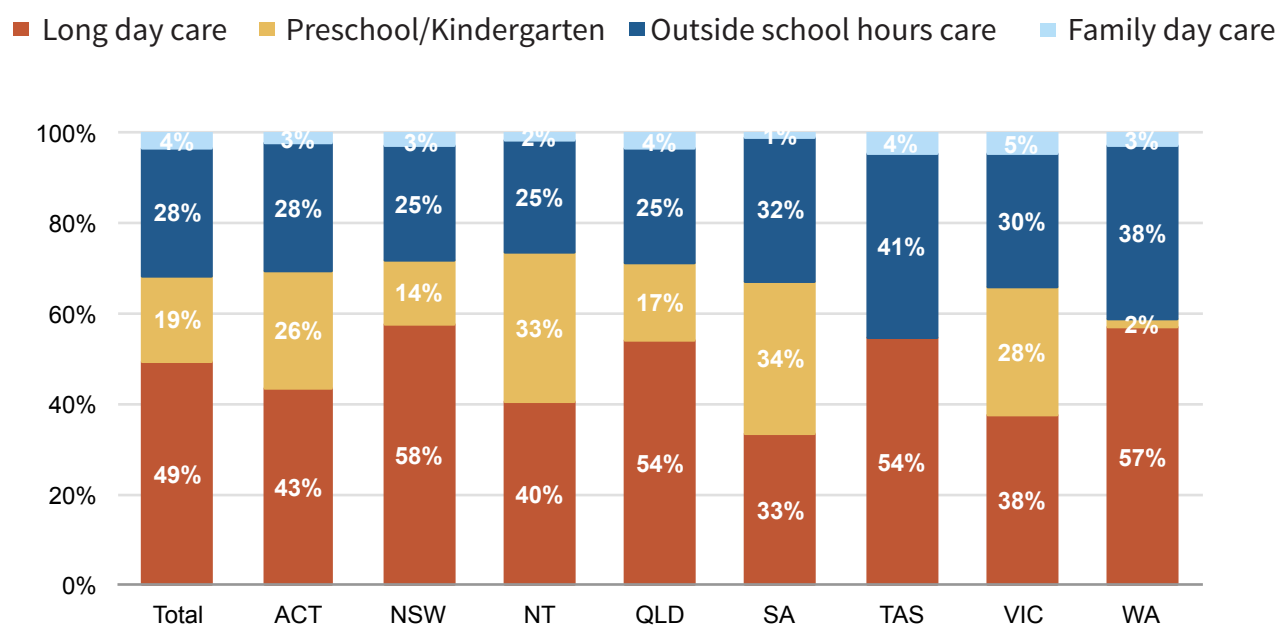


Table 1: Number of services by service sub-type and jurisdiction

	Family day care	Long day care	Preschool/ Kindergarten	Outside school hours care	Other	Total
ACT	9	156	93	101	0	359
NSW	177	3175	770	1378	0	5500
NT	4	88	73	54	2	221
QLD	114	1609	512	748	1	2984
SA	12	397	406	381	0	1196
TAS	10	123	0	93	0	226
VIC	200	1587	1194	1250	0	4231
WA	36	682	22	461	1	1202
TOTAL	562	7817	3070	4466	4	15,919

1 NQA ITS data collected on service sub-type is self-reported by providers when applying for service approval, and providers may choose multiple service sub-types. For example, a service providing both long day care and outside school hours care, or one providing both long day care and preschool/kindergarten.

2 Providers are not required to notify changes to this information, and therefore this NQA ITS information may not be current.

3 Centre-based services offering more than one type of service are classified as follows: services which provide long day care in addition to any other service type are classified as long day care services; services which provide preschool/kindergarten as well as outside school hours care are classified as preschool/kindergarten services; services which provide outside school hours care only are classified as outside school hours care services.

4 Excludes preschool/kindergarten services operating in Tasmania and Western Australia that are out of scope of the NQF, as well as other services that aren't regulated under the National Law.

5 Four services categorised as 'Other' excluded for graphical purposes.

Figure 6: Proportion of services by provider management type ^{1,2,3}

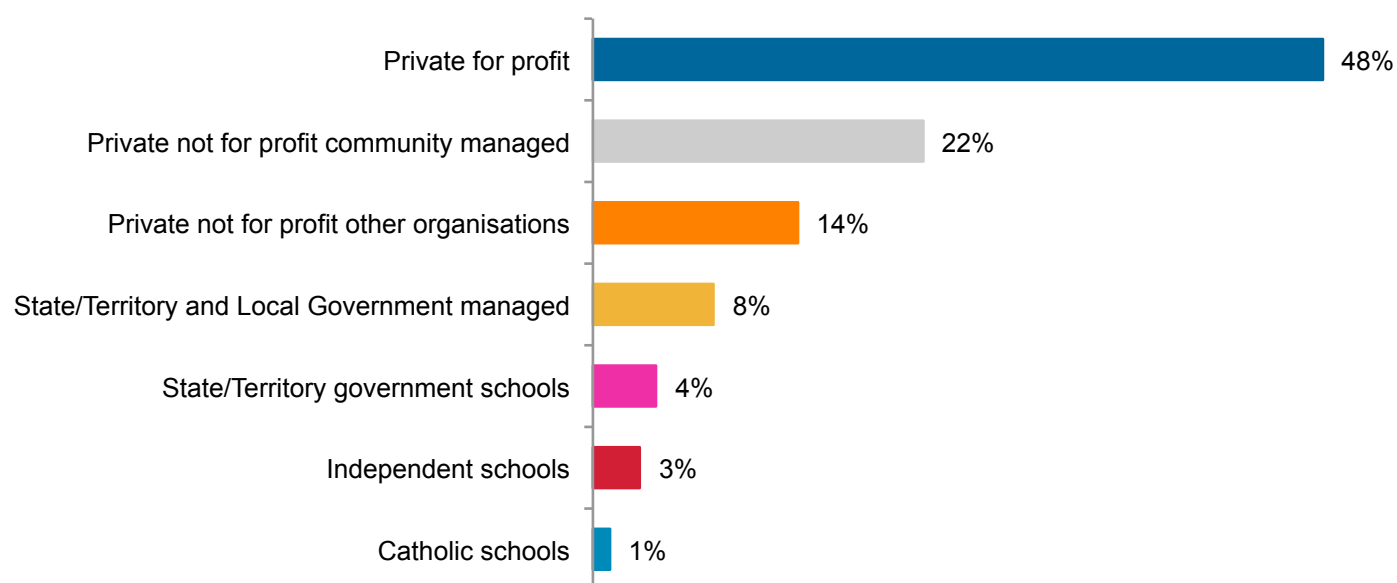


Table 2: Number and proportion of services by provider management type

Provider management type	Number of services	Proportion of services
Private for profit	7673	48%
Private not for profit community managed	3474	22%
Private not for profit other organisations	2156	14%
State/Territory and Local Government managed	1267	8%
State/Territory government schools	663	4%
Independent schools	492	3%
Catholic schools	180	1%
Not stated/Other	14	0%
Total	15,919	100%

¹ NQA ITS data collected on provider management type is self-reported by providers when applying for provider approval. Providers are not required to notify changes to this information, and therefore this NQA ITS information may not be current.

² Provider management type classifications are available at Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) [National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide, 2013](#) (Cat. No. 4240.0.55.002).

³ 14 services categorised as 'Not stated/Other' excluded for graphical purposes.

Figure 7 shows that 82% of approved providers operate a single service while 1% of approved providers operate 25 or more services.

Figure 7: Proportion of approved providers by size

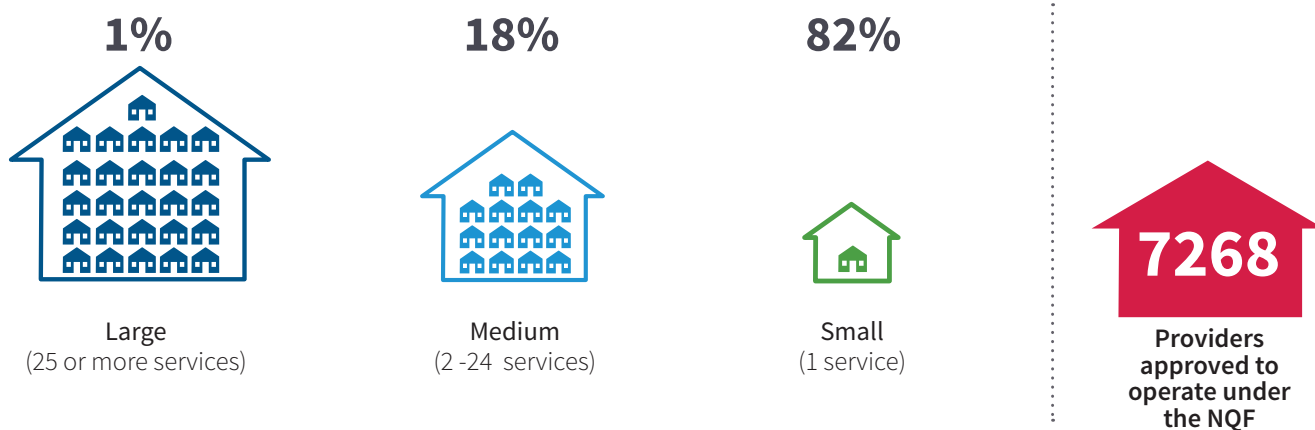
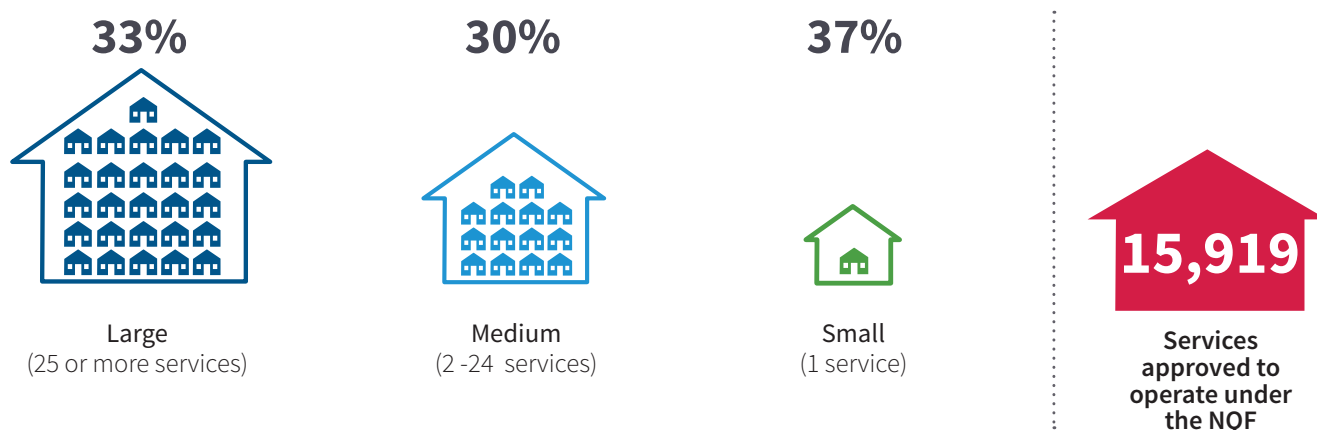


Figure 8 shows that 37% of approved services are operated by small approved providers while 33% of approved services are operated by large approved providers.

Figure 8: Proportion of approved services by provider size



Progress of assessment and rating

Table 3 includes all approved services. The proportion of services with a quality rating will not reach 100% at any one time because a small proportion of services will only recently have been approved and may not have started operating or may have only been operating for a short period of time. In general, regulatory authorities will not assess and rate newly approved services which have been operating for less than 9-12 months.

Table 3: Quality ratings by jurisdiction

	Number of services	Proportion of all services	Number of services with a quality rating	Proportion of services with a quality rating
ACT	359	2%	328	91%
NSW	5500	35%	5154	94%
NT	221	1%	217	98%
QLD	2984	19%	2832	95%
SA	1196	8%	1134	95%
TAS	226	1%	216	96%
VIC	4231	27%	3991	94%
WA	1202	8%	1103	92%
TOTAL	15,919	100%	14,975	94%

Table 4: Number of services with a quality rating by service sub-type and jurisdiction

	Family day care	Long day care	Preschool/ Kindergarten	Outside school hours care	Other	Total
ACT	7	141	90	90	0	328
NSW	170	2960	756	1268	0	5154
NT	4	87	73	51	2	217
QLD	105	1509	495	722	1	2832
SA	12	359	398	365	0	1134
TAS	10	119	0	87	0	216
VIC	165	1485	1168	1173	0	3991
WA	29	632	22	419	1	1103
TOTAL	502	7292	3002	4175	4	14,975

Quality improvement

Table 5 presents a service's previous overall rating alongside its reassessed overall rating. For example, 2117 services previously rated Working Towards NQS improved their rating to Meeting NQS after reassessment. While 1464 services previously rated Working Towards NQS received the same rating again after reassessment.

Table 5: Reassessments by overall quality rating¹

		Rating after reassessment				
		Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Total
Rating before reassessment	Significant Improvement Required	19	51	10	0	80
	Working Towards NQS	22	1464	2117	653	4256
	Meeting NQS	3	603	1890	554	3050
	Exceeding NQS	1	190	628	832	1651
	Total	45	2308	4645	2039	9037

		Rating after reassessment				
		Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Improvement rate
Rating before reassessment	Significant Improvement Required	24%	64%	13%	0%	76%
	Working Towards NQS	1%	34%	50%	15%	65%
	Meeting NQS	0%	20%	62%	18%	18%
	Exceeding NQS	0%	12%	38%	50%	-

¹ Reassessments include the following processes described in the National Law: i. Partial reassessment and re-rating requested by provider; ii. Partial reassessment and re-rating instigated by the regulatory authority; iii. Full reassessment and re-rating requested by provider; iv. Full reassessment and re-rating instigated by the regulatory authority.

Overall quality ratings

Authorised officers from state and territory regulatory authorities assess and rate services using the seven quality areas, 15 standards and 40 elements that make up the NQS. Services are given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating.





1 Educational program and practice	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent
2 Children's health and safety	Service does not meet one of the seven quality areas or a section of the legislation and there is a significant risk to the safety, health and wellbeing of children.	Service provides a safe education and care program, but there are one or more areas identified for improvement.	Service provides quality education and care in all seven quality areas.	Service goes beyond the requirements of the National Quality Standard in at least four of the seven quality areas.	Exceeding rated services that promote exceptional education and care, demonstrate sector leadership, and are committed to continually improving.
3 Physical environment					
4 Staffing arrangements					
5 Relationships with children					
6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities					
7 Governance and leadership	The regulatory authority will take immediate action.				This rating can only be awarded by ACECQA.
					

Table 6: Overall quality ratings by jurisdiction

	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total
ACT	0	79 24%	92 28%	155 47%	2	328
NSW	8	1323 26%	2446 47%	1361 26%	16	5154
NT	0	64 29%	114 53%	38 18%	1	217
QLD	1	427 15%	1535 54%	859 30%	10	2832
SA	0	200 18%	381 34%	544 48%	9	1134
TAS	1	54 25%	88 41%	73 34%	0	216
VIC	0	632 16%	2043 51%	1306 33%	10	3991
WA	0	335 30%	552 50%	216 20%	0	1103
TOTAL	10	3114 21%	7251 48%	4552 30%	48	14,975

Figure 9: Overall quality ratings by service type

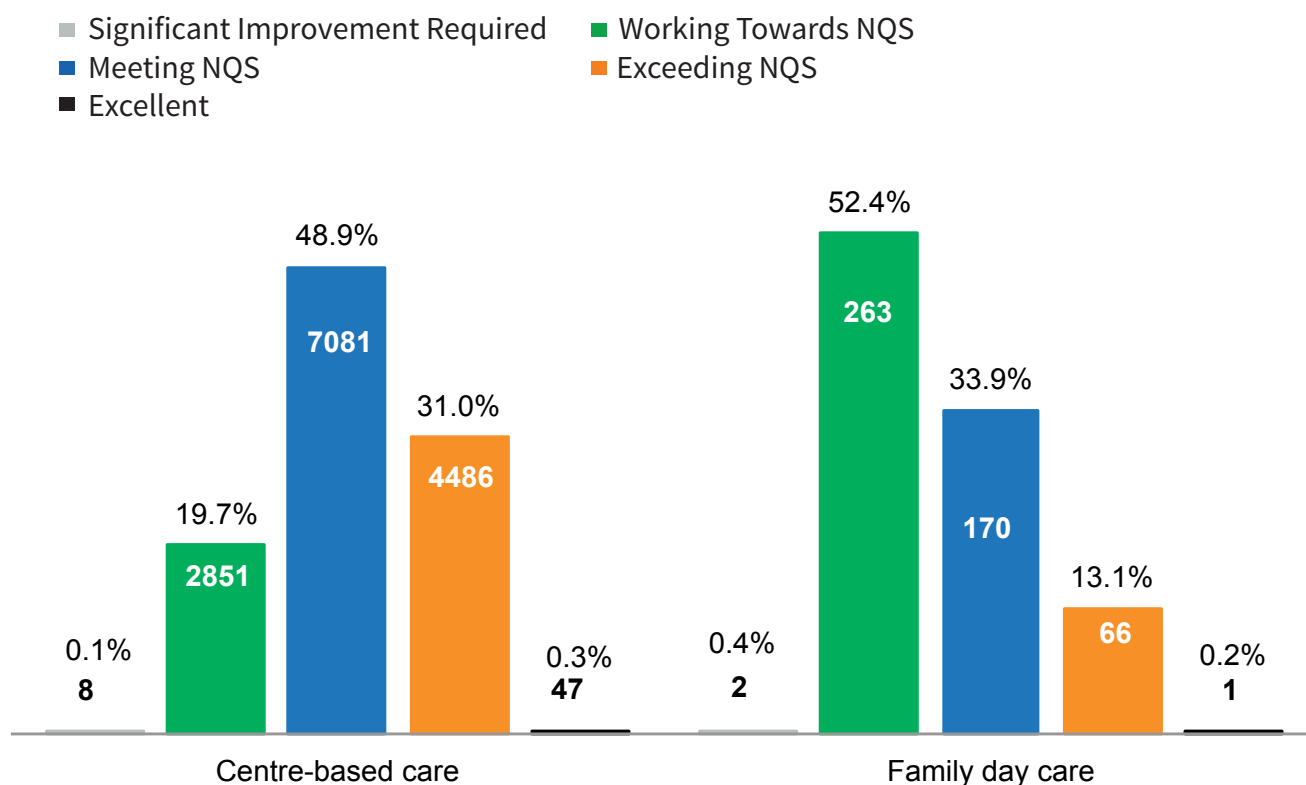


Figure 10: Overall quality ratings by centre-based service sub-type

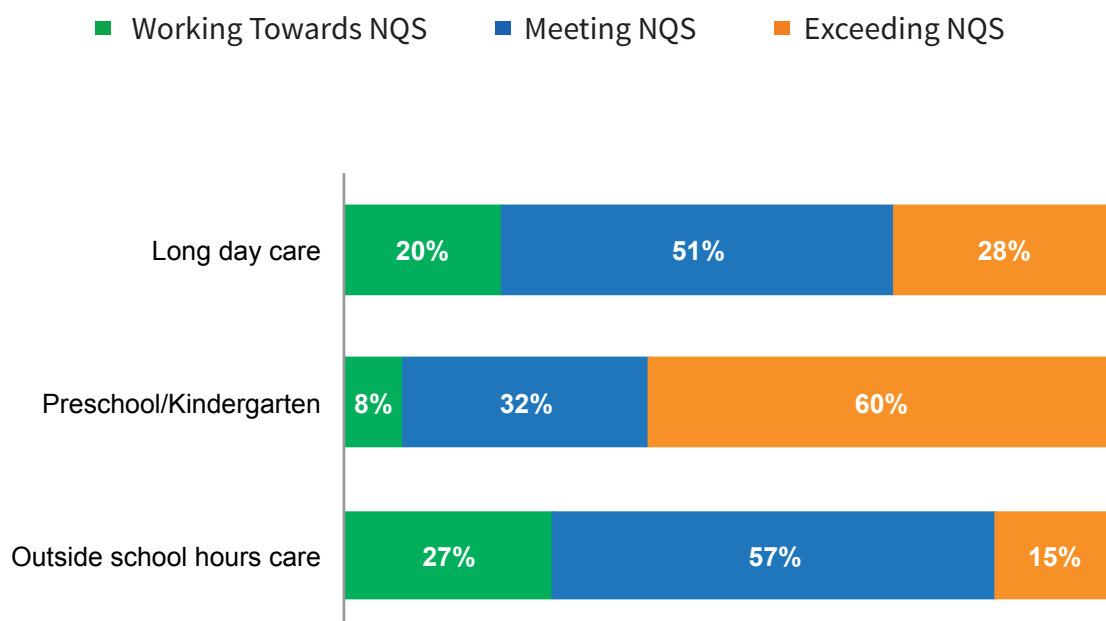
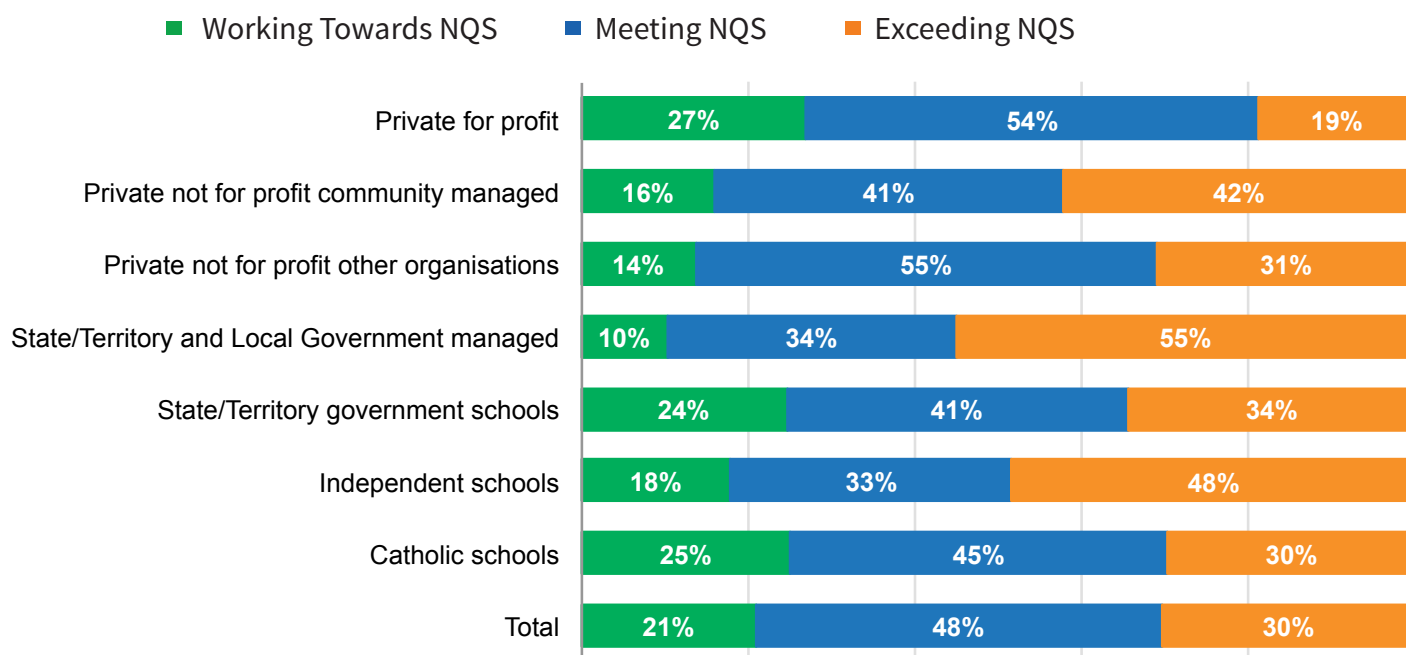


Figure 11 shows the variation in spread of quality ratings between provider management types.

These differences can reflect a range of contextual factors, such as the service profile of these provider types. For example, half of all 'State/Territory and Local Government managed' services are preschools/kindergartens, with preschools/kindergartens performing better against the NQS than other service types (see Figure 10). In contrast, preschools/kindergartens make up only 1% of 'Private for profit' services.

Figure 11: Overall quality ratings by provider management type¹



¹ 14 providers categorised as 'Not stated/Other' excluded for graphical purposes.

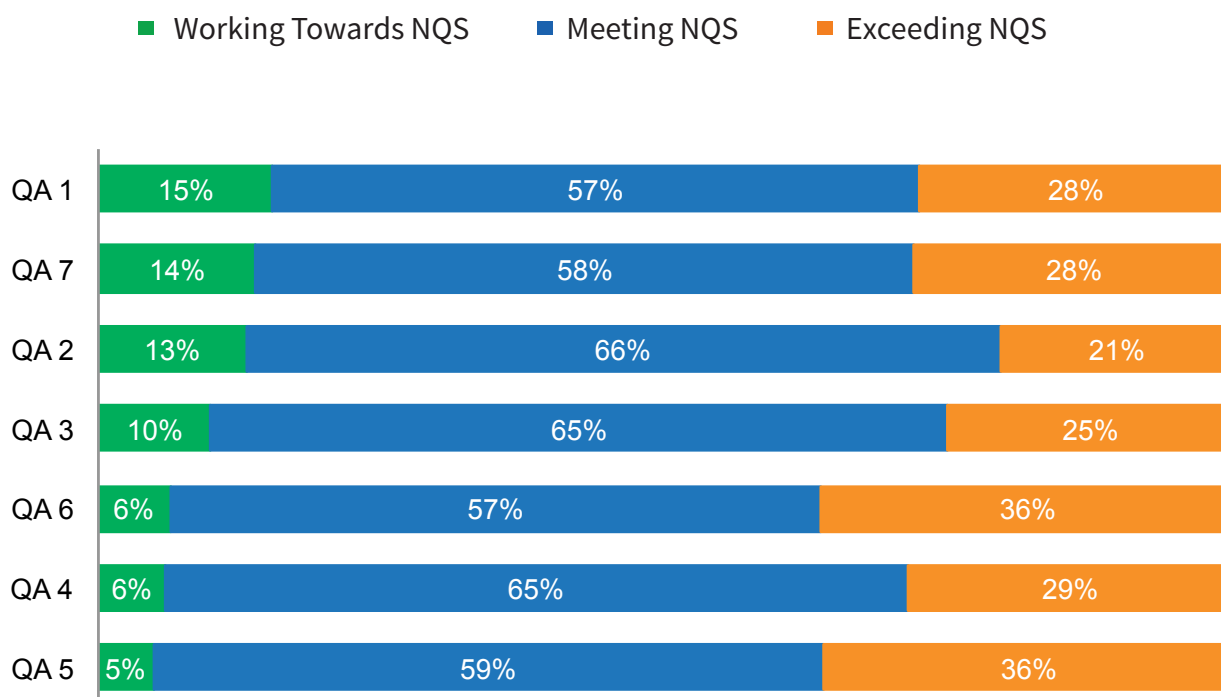
Quality area ratings

Table 7 and Figure 12 rank the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the number and proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Table 7: Quality area ratings

	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS
Quality Area 1 - Educational program and practice	0	2306	8504	4165
Quality Area 7 - Governance and leadership	7	2077	8677	4214
Quality Area 2 - Children's health and safety	10	1947	9930	3088
Quality Area 3 - Physical environment	3	1491	9700	3781
Quality Area 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities	0	937	8600	5438
Quality Area 4 - Staffing arrangements	2	886	9770	4317
Quality Area 5 - Relationships with children	0	716	8854	5405

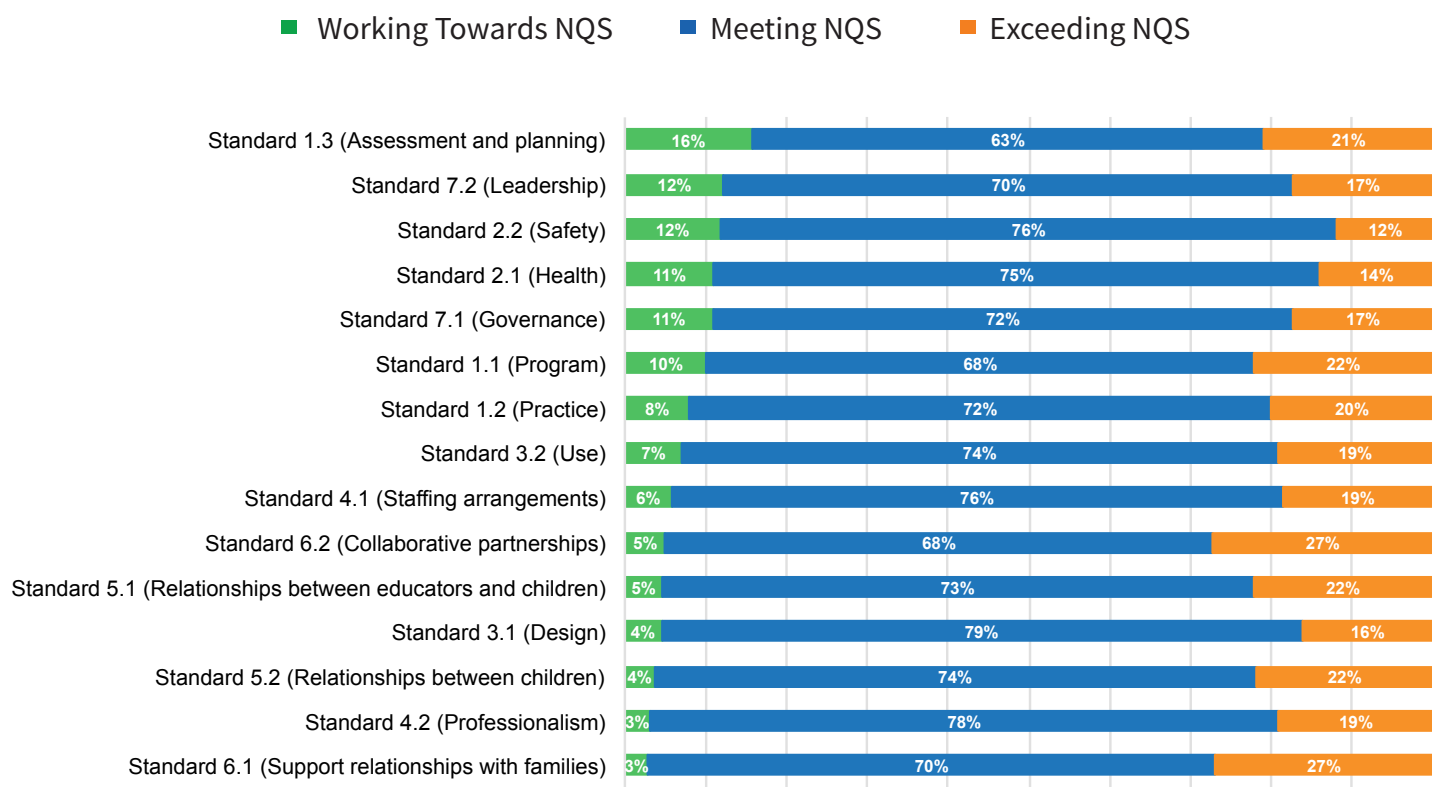
Figure 12: Quality area ratings



Standard level ratings under the 2018 NQS

Figure 13 ranks the 15 standards of the 2018 NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each standard.

Figure 13: Standard level ratings under the 2018 NQS



Element level results under the 2018 NQS

Table 8 ranks the 40 elements of the 2018 NQS in descending order, based on the proportion of services that do not meet each element.

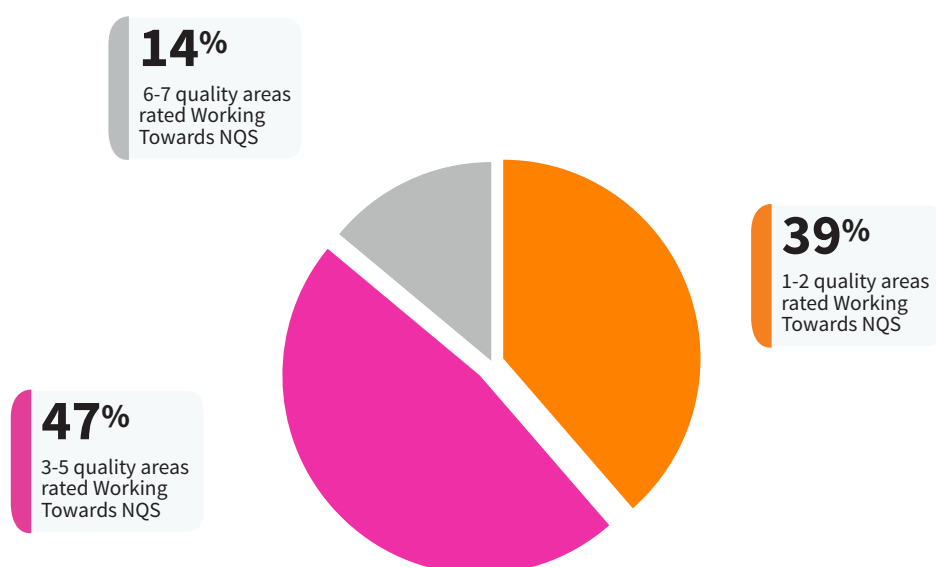
Table 8: Element level results under 2018 NQS

	% Not Met		% Not Met
1.3.1 (Assessment and planning cycle)	13.0%	5.1.2 (Dignity and rights of the child)	3.7%
1.3.2 (Critical reflection)	12.7%	3.1.2 (Upkeep)	3.5%
7.1.2 (Management systems)	9.5%	7.1.1 (Service philosophy and purpose)	3.4%
2.1.2 (Health practices and procedures)	9.0%	5.2.2 (Self-regulation)	3.3%
7.2.2 (Educational leadership)	8.1%	2.1.3 (Healthy lifestyle)	3.3%
2.2.1 (Supervision)	7.8%	3.2.2 (Resources support play-based learning)	3.0%
1.1.3 (Program learning opportunities)	7.6%	7.1.3 (Roles and responsibilities)	2.9%
7.2.3 (Development of professionals)	7.5%	5.1.1 (Positive educator to child interactions)	2.7%
2.2.2 (Incident and emergency management)	6.0%	2.2.3 (Child protection)	2.7%
4.1.1 (Organisation of educators)	5.5%	4.2.2 (Professional standards)	2.4%
1.1.1 (Approved learning framework)	4.9%	2.1.1 (Wellbeing and comfort)	2.2%
1.2.2 (Responsive teaching and scaffolding)	4.9%	6.2.2 (Access and participation)	2.2%
7.2.1 (Continuous improvement)	4.8%	3.1.1 (Fit for purpose)	2.0%
1.2.3 (Child directed learning)	4.7%	6.2.1 (Transitions)	1.7%
3.2.3 (Environmentally responsible)	4.7%	6.1.3 (Families are supported)	1.6%
1.1.2 (Child-centred)	4.6%	4.2.1 (Professional collaboration)	1.5%
1.2.1 (Intentional teaching)	4.4%	6.1.1 (Engagement with the service)	1.5%
1.3.3 (Information for families)	3.8%	5.2.1 (Collaborative learning)	1.3%
3.2.1 (Inclusive environment)	3.8%	6.1.2 (Parent views are respected)	1.3%
6.2.3 (Community engagement)	3.7%	4.1.2 (Continuity of staff)	1.1%

Services rated Working Towards NQS

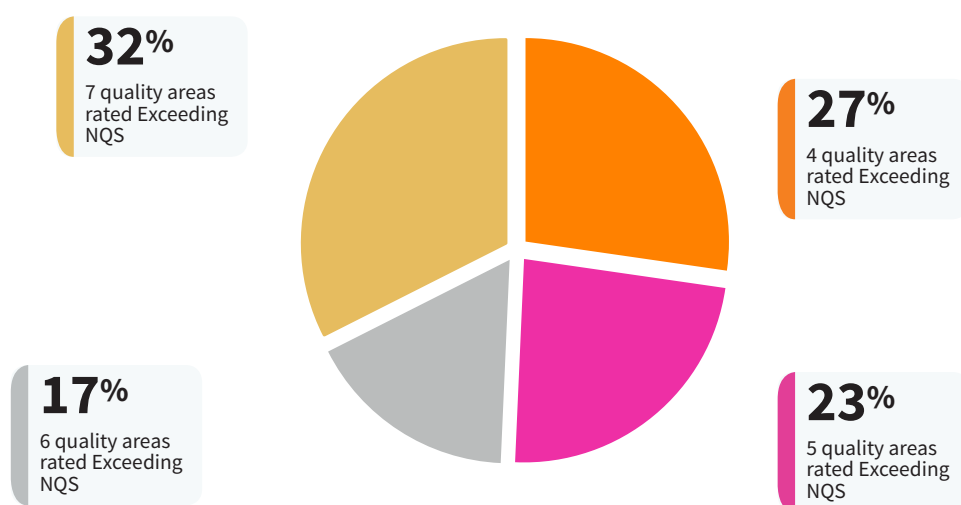
A service receives an overall rating of Working Towards NQS if any of the seven quality areas are rated Working Towards NQS. A quality area is rated Working Towards NQS if any of the standards within that quality area are rated Working Towards NQS.

Figure 14: Proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS by number of quality areas rated Working Towards NQS



Services rated Exceeding NQS

Figure 15: Proportion of services rated Exceeding NQS by number of quality areas rated Exceeding NQS

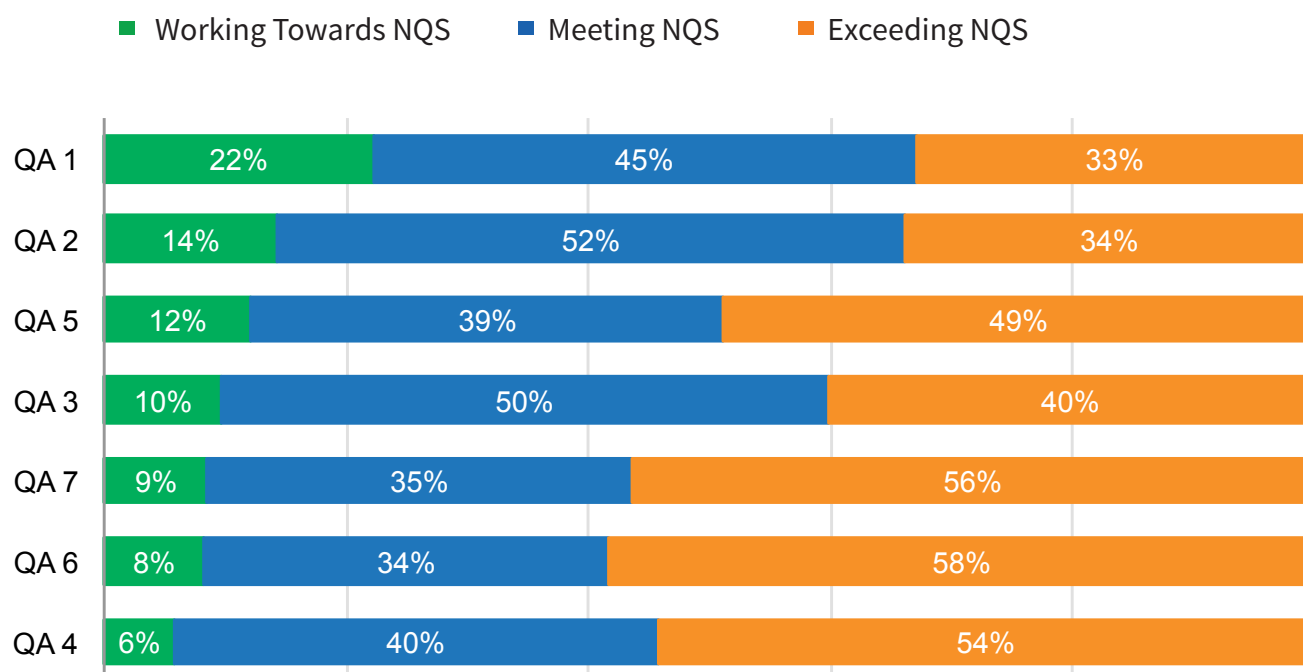


Australian Capital Territory summary

359	services comprising 350 centre-based services and 9 family day care services
328 (91%)	services with a quality rating
79	services rated Working Towards NQS
92	services rated Meeting NQS
155	services rated Exceeding NQS
2	services rated Excellent by ACECQA

Figure 16 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 16: Quality area ratings



Contact details

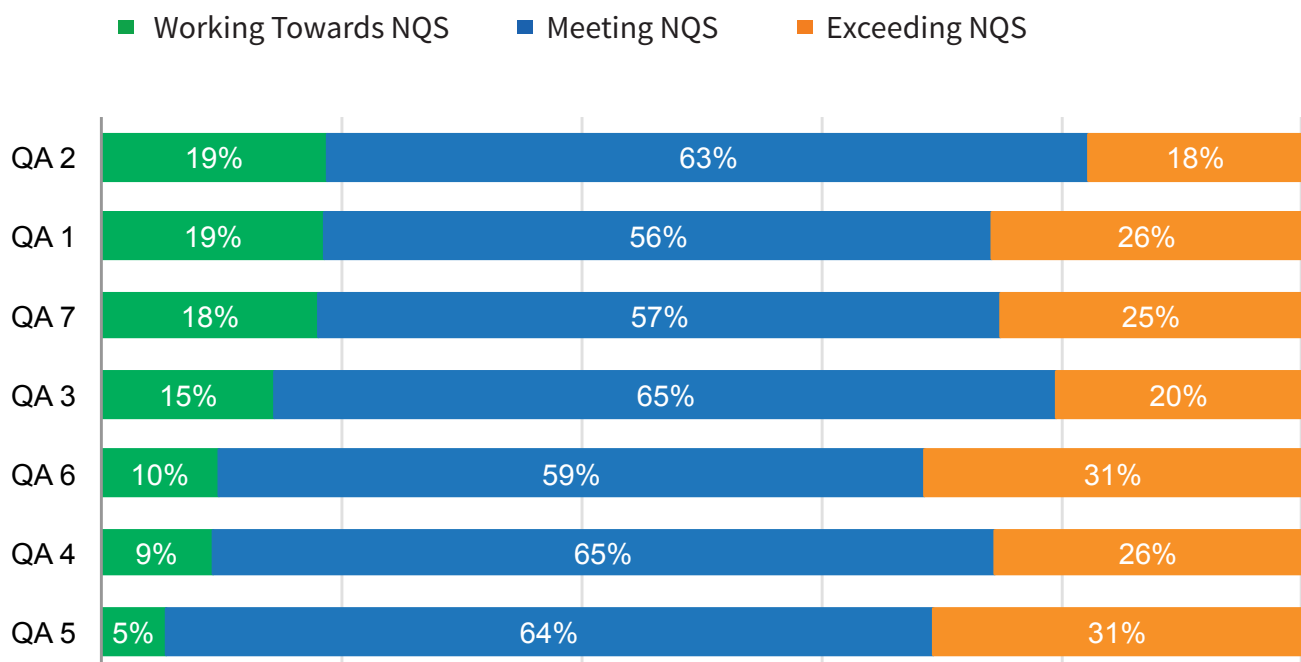
Education Directorate
Children's Education and Care Assurance
www.education.act.gov.au/early-childhood

New South Wales summary

5500	services comprising 5323 centre-based services and 177 family day care services
5154 (94%)	services with a quality rating
8	services rated Significant Improvement Required
1323	services rated Working Towards NQS
2446	services rated Meeting NQS
1361	services rated Exceeding NQS
16	services rated Excellent by ACECQA

Figure 17 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 17: Quality area ratings



Contact details

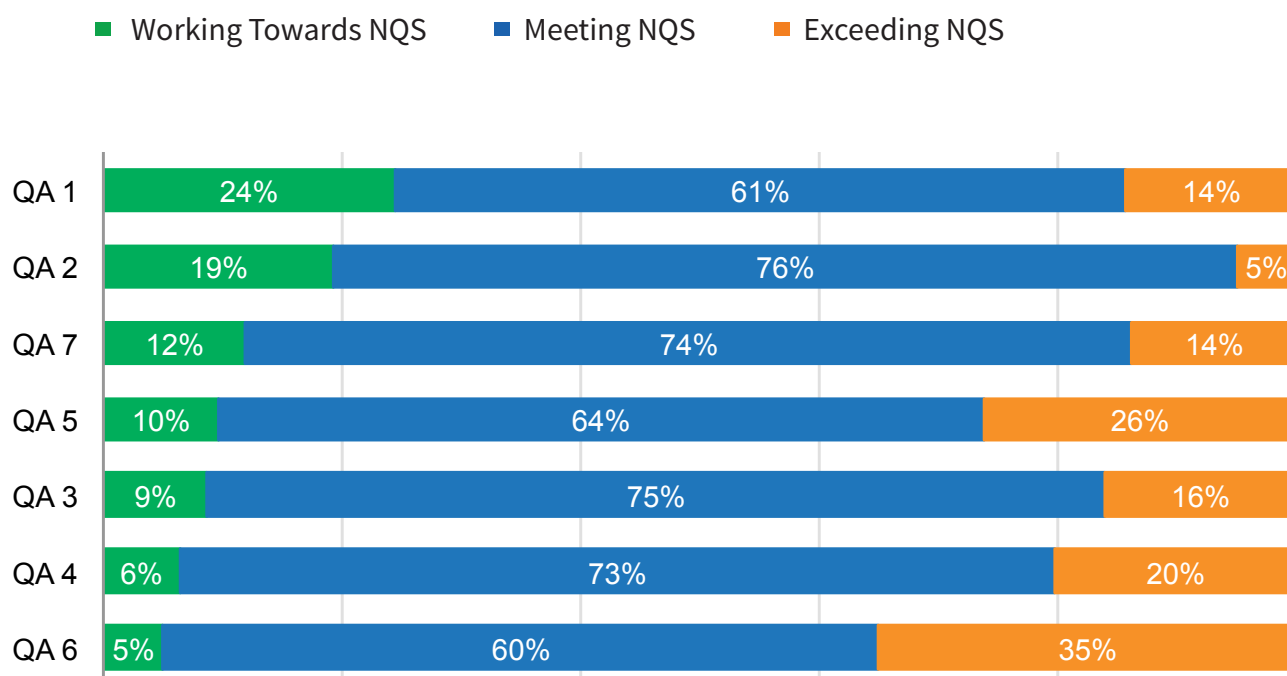
Department of Education
Early Childhood Education Directorate
www.education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education

Northern Territory summary

221	services comprising 217 centre-based services and four family day care services
217 (98%)	services with a quality rating
64	services rated Working Towards NQS
114	services rated Meeting NQS
38	services rated Exceeding NQS
1	service rated Excellent by ACECQA

Figure 18 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 18: Quality area ratings



Contact details

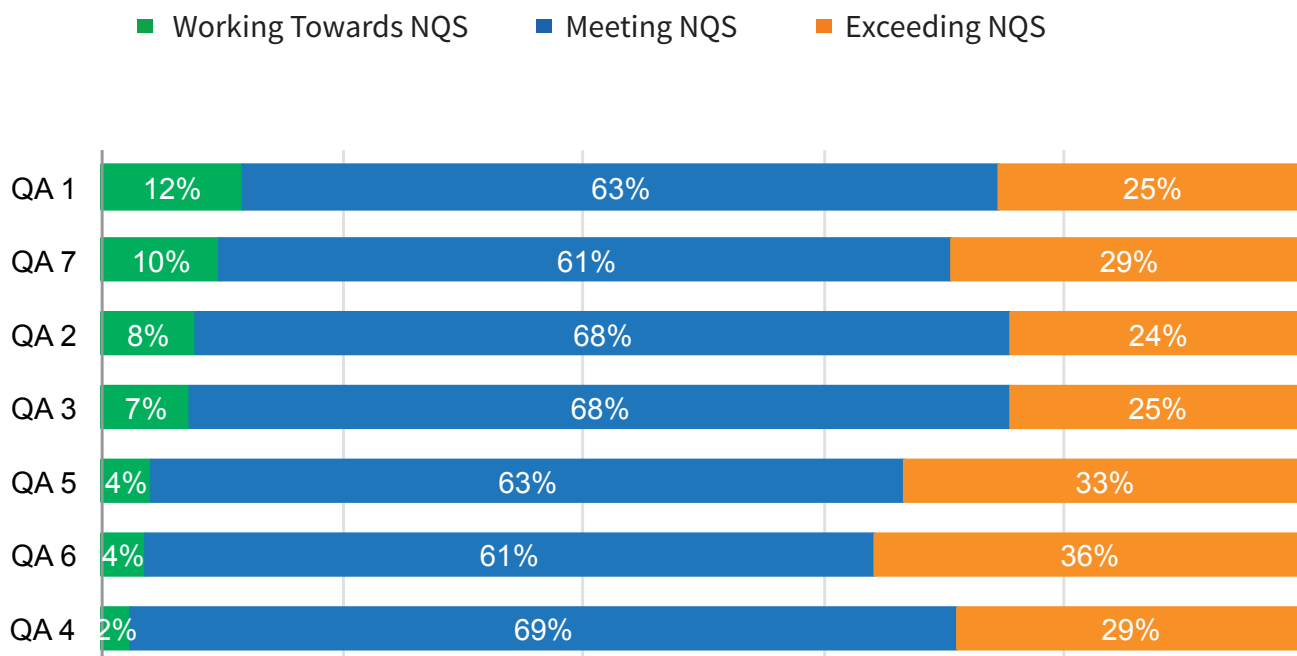
Department of Education
Quality Education and Care NT
www.nt.gov.au/learning/early-childhood

Queensland summary

2984	services comprising 2870 centre-based services and 114 family day care services
2832 (95%)	services with a quality rating
1	service rated Significant Improvement Required
427	services rated Working Towards NQS
1535	services rated Meeting NQS
859	services rated Exceeding NQS
10	services rated Excellent by ACECQA

Figure 19 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 19: Quality area ratings



Contact details

Department of Education
Early Childhood Education and Care
www.earlychildhood.qld.gov.au

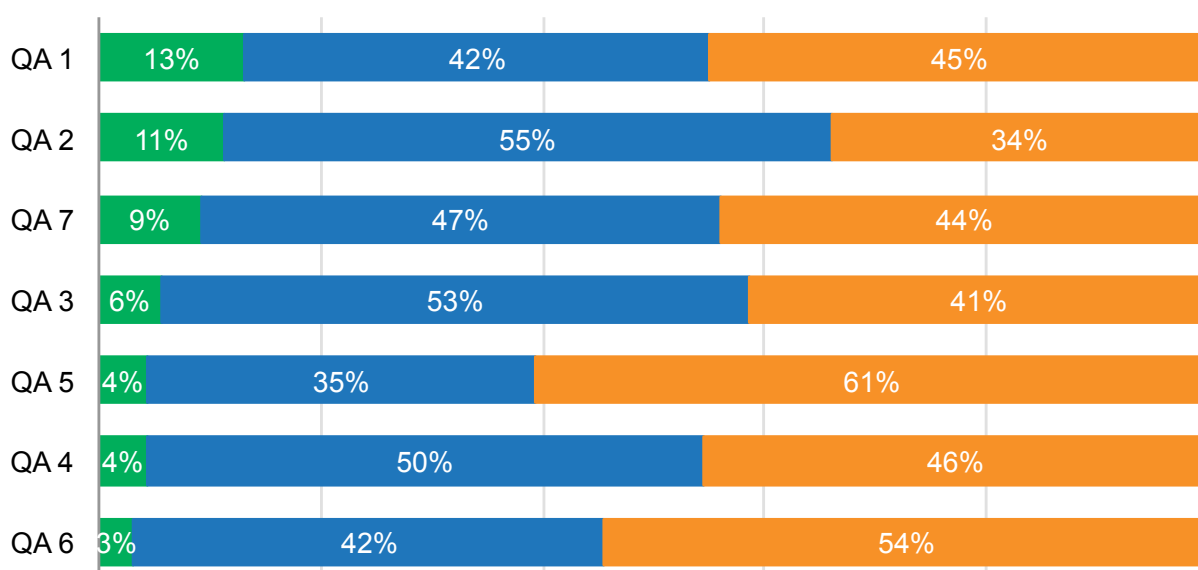
South Australia summary

1196	services comprising 1184 centre-based services and 12 family day care services
1134 (95%)	services with a quality rating
200	services rated Working Towards NQS
381	services rated Meeting NQS
544	services rated Exceeding NQS
9	services rated Excellent by ACECQA

Figure 20 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 20: Quality area ratings

■ Working Towards NQS ■ Meeting NQS ■ Exceeding NQS



Contact details

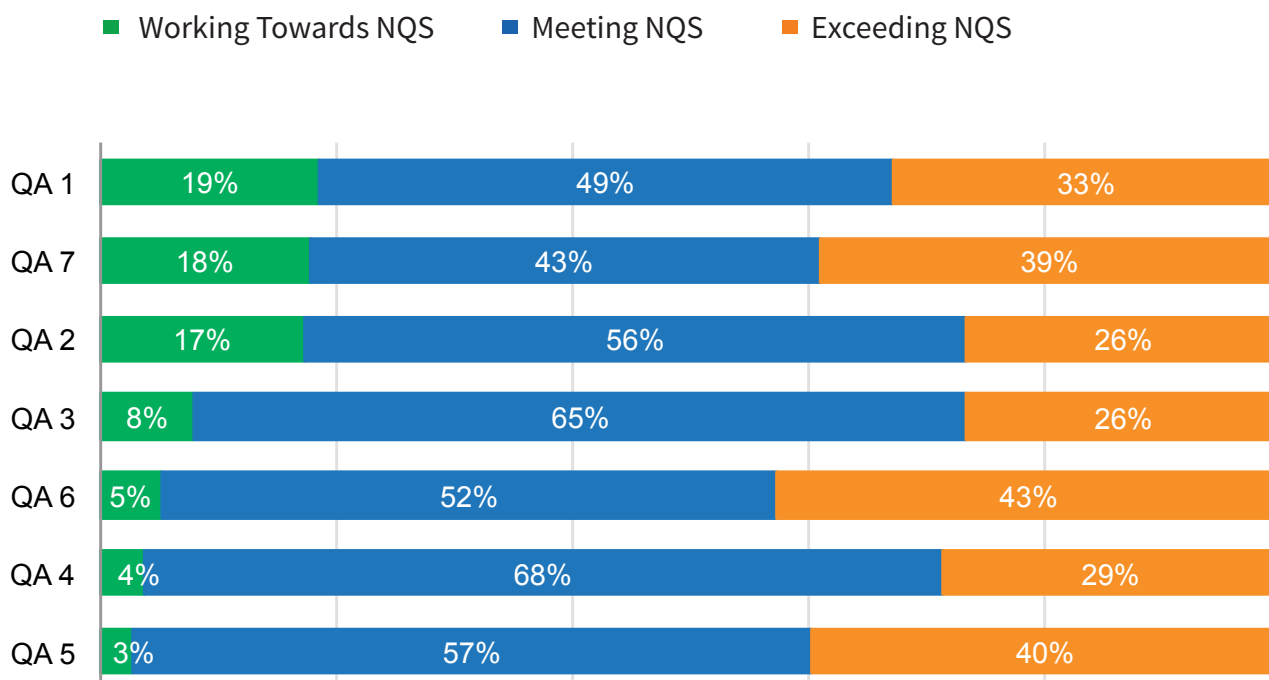
Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards
Board of South Australia
www.esb.sa.gov.au/early-childhood

Tasmania summary

226	services comprising 216 centre-based services and 10 family day care services
216 (96%)	services with a quality rating
1	service rated Significant Improvement Required
54	services rated Working Towards NQS
88	services rated Meeting NQS
73	services rated Exceeding NQS

Figure 21 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 21: Quality area ratings



Contact details

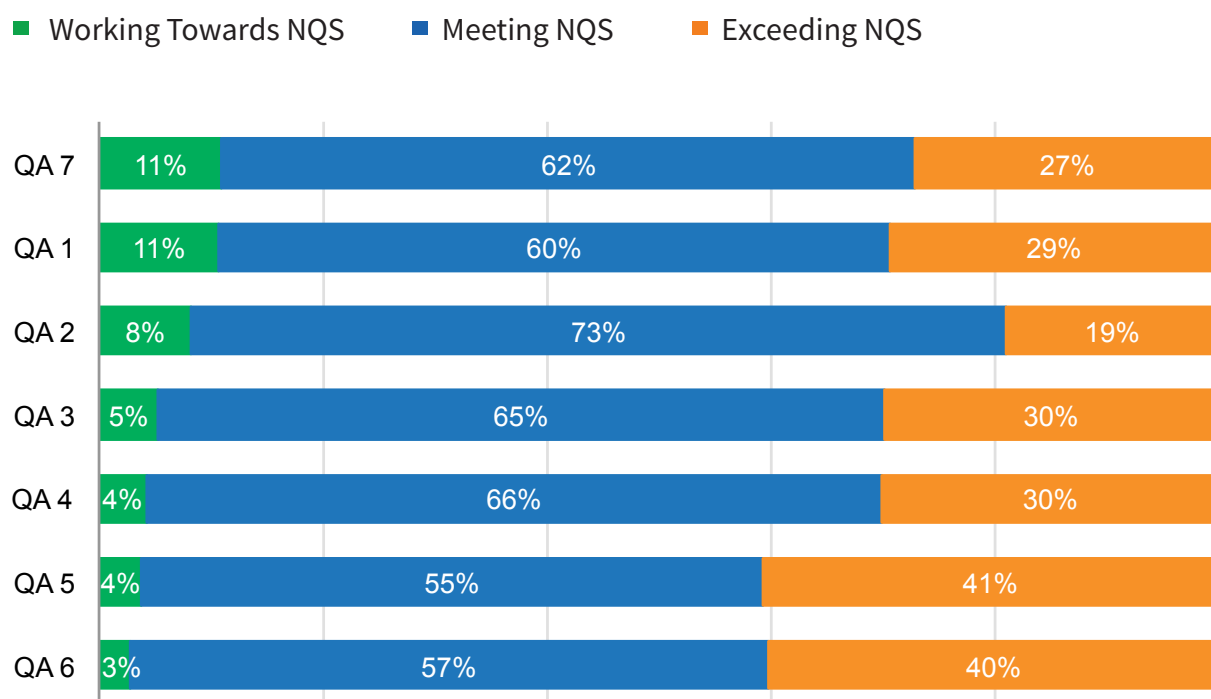
Department of Education
Education and Care Unit
www.educationandcare.tas.gov.au

Victoria summary

4231	services comprising 4031 centre-based services and 200 family day care services
3991 (94%)	services with a quality rating
632	services rated Working Towards NQS
2043	services rated Meeting NQS
1306	services rated Exceeding NQS
10	services rated Excellent by ACECQA

Figure 22 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 22: Quality area ratings



Contact details

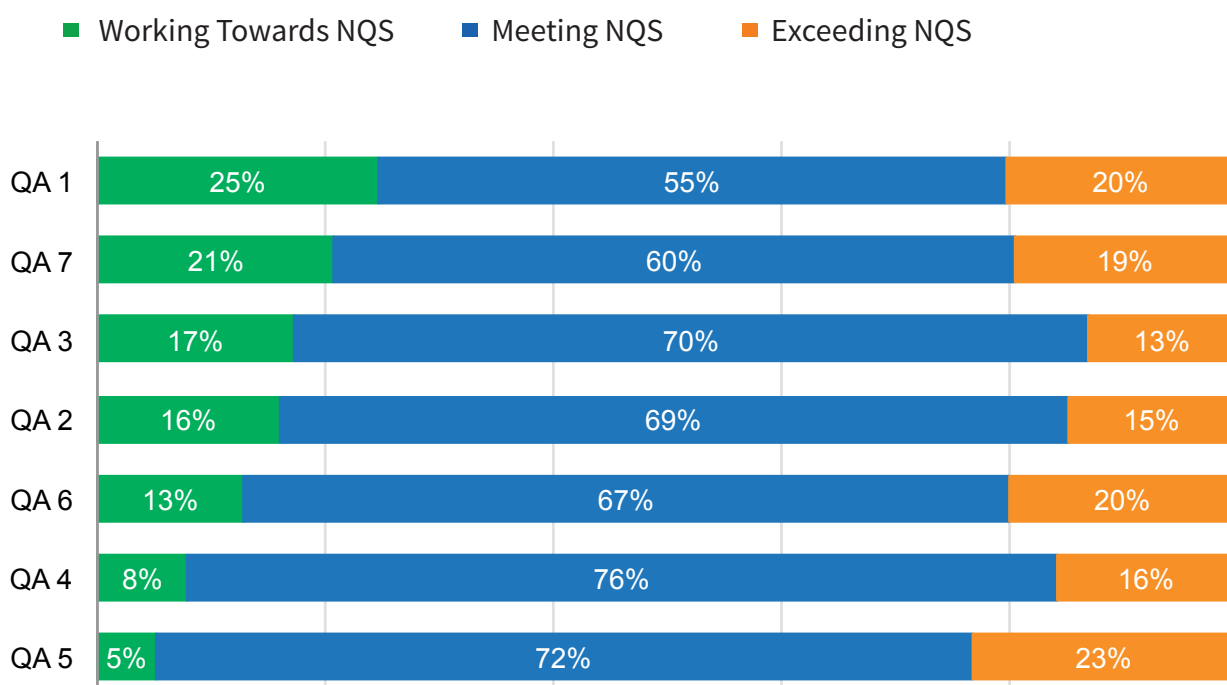
Department of Education and Training
Quality Assessment and Regulation Division
www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation

Western Australia summary

1202	services comprising 1166 centre-based services and 36 family day care services
1103 (92%)	services with a quality rating
335	services rated Working Towards NQS
552	services rated Meeting NQS
216	services rated Exceeding NQS

Figure 23 ranks the seven quality areas of the NQS in descending order based on the proportion of services rated Working Towards NQS in each quality area.

Figure 23: Quality area ratings



Contact details

Department of Communities
Education and Care Regulatory Unit
www.communities.wa.gov.au



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