

Who is this guidance for?

ACECQA determines and publishes lists of approved qualifications for three types of early childhood educators under the National Quality Framework (NQF):

- Early childhood teacher
- Diploma level educator
- Certificate III level educator.

This guidance is for organisations who want to apply to have their program(s) recognised by ACECQA and added to ACECQA's published lists of approved early childhood education and care qualifications.

Who should apply to ACECQA?

Organisations should apply to ACECQA if they:

- want their program added to ACECQA's approved lists of qualifications
- are making significant changes to the structure or content of an approved program.

How does ACECQA assess qualifications?

To determine equivalence, ACECQA will assess your program in four areas:

- Qualification requirement
- Age focus of qualification
- Professional experience
- Curriculum specification.

More detail is included within ACECQA's qualification assessment guidelines for organisation applicants (see **Attachment A**).

If you are concerned that your program may not satisfy ACECQA's requirements, you can seek general advice from ACECQA before lodging your application.

What is the relevant law?

The [Education and Care Services National Law](#) gives ACECQA responsibility for determining if qualifications are equivalent to the approved early childhood educator qualifications under the NQF.

This guidance should also be read in conjunction with regulation 137 and 138 of the [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#), which sets out the requirements for an application, and the requirement for ACECQA to publish lists of approved qualifications.

How do I make an application?

To make an application to ACECQA, you must:

- complete the application form
- provide the necessary documentation
- pay the required [fee](#).

Applications can be sent to apply@acecqa.gov.au

What are the key documents I should refer to when making my application?

There are two key documents:

- Qualification assessment guidelines for organisation applicants (see **Attachment A**).
- Qualification assessment application form (available on ACECQA's website) [acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/assessment/approval/early-childhood](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/qualifications/assessment/approval/early-childhood).

What should my application include?

You must provide all the documents outlined or referred to in this guidance, as well as any other information reasonably requested by ACECQA.

Your application must include a detailed outline of the program, including its length, delivery mode(s), and any supervised practicum placements.

It should also include evidence such as course handbooks and unit outlines, internal approval and assessment documents, and other relevant policy documents.

All documents submitted should be page numbered and referenced appropriately.

What is the application fee?

The application fee, which must be paid in advance, is currently **AUD\$2322** (see [Indexed fees for the 2020/21 financial year](#)).

Payment can be made online at [acecqa.gov.au/help/pay-online](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/help/pay-online). You must quote the receipt number on the application form as proof of payment.

Payment can also be made by phone (during ACECQA office hours), Australia Post money order, international money order, or bank cheque made payable to 'ACECQA'.

The fee is subject to indexation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index. It is not subject to GST.

There is no refund if an application is unsuccessful or if an applicant chooses to withdraw the application after it has been submitted.

What happens after I submit my application?

ACECQA will email you within 10 working days to acknowledge receipt of your application and confirmation of payment.

You are responsible for ensuring that the application is properly filled in and all relevant documents have been provided. ACECQA is committed to processing applications within 60 days from receiving a complete application.

If ACECQA needs to request additional information or documents, then the application process will be delayed.

In processing the application, ACECQA may take steps to verify the information provided in your application.

ACECQA will advise you of the outcome of your application by email. If unsuccessful, you will receive reasons for the decision.

How long does approval by ACECQA last for?

A program is approved by ACECQA for five years. The program will remain on ACECQA's approved lists of qualifications for that five year period unless it undergoes significant changes.

Can I make changes to an approved program?

If you want to make changes to your approved program that do not significantly affect the program or student outcomes, you can submit a [minor amendment notification form](#).

A new application will need to be submitted for any changes that affect student outcomes or the way the program meets ACECQA's assessment guidelines.

Will my application remain confidential?

Information provided by you will be handled in line with [ACECQA's Privacy Policy](#). ACECQA may need to disclose information to some third parties to verify the information provided in your application.

Can I appeal the outcome of the assessment?

ACECQA will consider requests for internal review in limited circumstances. Those circumstances include where the application process has been flawed or unfair, or if ACECQA failed to give weight to special circumstances or facts existing at the time of the assessment.

How can I complain about the application process?

Complaints about the fairness of an application process can be made in writing to ACECQA. If ACECQA is unable to resolve a complaint, then you can contact the National Education and Care Services FOI and Privacy Commissioners and Ombudsman. More information is available on the website necsopic.edu.au.

Where can I get further information?

If you have any other questions or queries about the application process, please contact ACECQA on 1300 422 327 or apply@acecqa.gov.au.

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER OR EQUIVALENT

Qualification level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Bachelor's degree level or equivalent early childhood teaching qualification that meets the level 7 qualification type descriptor under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
Age focus of qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Early childhood teaching qualifications must include curriculum and professional experience that covers the age range from birth to five years of age (including transition to school). Qualifications that cover the age range from birth to eight years are preferred. Where qualifications span birth to 12 years, specialisation in early childhood will be required. For example, we would expect to see a significant number of units and period of time devoted to early childhood.
Supervised professional experience during qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ 80 days supervised professional experience for undergraduate early childhood teaching qualifications. This must include a minimum of 10 days supervised professional experience with children aged birth to under 3 years old (0 – 35 months)*, and a significant number of days in early childhood settings with children aged 3 until before they start formal schooling. The remaining balance may be undertaken with school aged children. ▶ 60 days supervised professional experience for post graduate early childhood teaching qualifications. This must include a minimum of 10 days supervised professional experience with children aged birth to under 3 years old (0 – 35 months)*, and a significant number of days in early childhood settings with children aged 3 until before they start formal schooling. The remaining balance may be undertaken with school aged children.

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER OR EQUIVALENT

Curriculum content of qualification

Early childhood teaching qualifications comprise a mix of curriculum, learning and pedagogical theory, professional studies, practicum experiences, and cultural studies. ACECQA will consider the following six areas as part of the assessment process.

Child development and care:

- learning, development and care
- language development
- social and emotional development
- child health, wellbeing and safety
- early intervention
- diversity, difference and inclusivity
- learners with special / additional needs
- transitions and continuity of learning (including transition to school).

Teaching pedagogies:

- alternative pedagogies and curriculum approaches
- play based pedagogies
- guiding behaviour / engaging young learners
- teaching methods and strategies
- children with diverse needs and backgrounds
- working with children who speak languages other than, or in addition to, English
- contemporary society and pedagogy.

Education and curriculum studies:

- Early Years Learning Framework
- the Australian curriculum
- numeracy, science and technology
- language and literacy
- English as an additional language
- social and environmental education
- creative arts and music
- physical and health education
- curriculum planning, programming and evaluation.

Family and community contexts:

- developing family and community partnerships
- multicultural education
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- socially inclusive practice
- culture, diversity and inclusion.

History and philosophy of early childhood:

- historical and comparative perspectives
- contemporary theories and practice
- ethics and professional practice.

Early childhood professional practice:

- educational leadership
- management and administration
- professional identity and development
- advocacy
- research.

DIPLOMA LEVEL EDUCATOR OR EQUIVALENT

Qualification level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An equivalent qualification in early childhood education and care that meets the level 5 qualification type descriptor under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). 		
Age focus of qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Early childhood education and care qualifications that include curriculum and supervised work placement that cover the age range from birth to five years of age. 		
Supervised professional experience during qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At least 240 hours of work placement in an early childhood setting. 		
Curriculum content of qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Equivalency will be assessed against the Community Services (CHC) national training packages (Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care): training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC50113 <p>ACECQA will consider the following four areas in the assessment process.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Child development and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care for babies and toddlers • Provide care for children • Develop positive and respectful relationships with children • Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children • Ensure the health and safety of children • Promote and provide healthy food and drinks • Establish and implement plans for developing cooperative behaviour • Implement strategies for the inclusion of all children • Foster the holistic development and wellbeing of the child in early childhood. </td> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Early childhood professional practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote children's agency • Identify and respond to children and young people at risk • Provide an emergency first aid response in an education and care setting. • Work within a relevant legal and ethical framework • Maintain work health and safety • Facilitate compliance in an education and care service. </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Child development and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care for babies and toddlers • Provide care for children • Develop positive and respectful relationships with children • Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children • Ensure the health and safety of children • Promote and provide healthy food and drinks • Establish and implement plans for developing cooperative behaviour • Implement strategies for the inclusion of all children • Foster the holistic development and wellbeing of the child in early childhood. 	<p>Early childhood professional practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote children's agency • Identify and respond to children and young people at risk • Provide an emergency first aid response in an education and care setting. • Work within a relevant legal and ethical framework • Maintain work health and safety • Facilitate compliance in an education and care service.
<p>Child development and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care for babies and toddlers • Provide care for children • Develop positive and respectful relationships with children • Establish and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children • Ensure the health and safety of children • Promote and provide healthy food and drinks • Establish and implement plans for developing cooperative behaviour • Implement strategies for the inclusion of all children • Foster the holistic development and wellbeing of the child in early childhood. 	<p>Early childhood professional practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote children's agency • Identify and respond to children and young people at risk • Provide an emergency first aid response in an education and care setting. • Work within a relevant legal and ethical framework • Maintain work health and safety • Facilitate compliance in an education and care service. 		

DIPLOMA LEVEL EDUCATOR OR EQUIVALENT

Curriculum content of qualification

Curriculum studies:

- Use an approved learning framework to guide practice
- Design and implement the curriculum to foster children's learning and development
- Analyse information to inform learning
- Nurture creativity in children
- Embed sustainable practices in service operations.

Family and community contexts:

- Work effectively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Work in partnership with families to provide appropriate education and care for children
- Develop cultural competence.

CERTIFICATE III LEVEL EDUCATOR OR EQUIVALENT

Qualification level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An equivalent qualification in early childhood education and care that meets the level 3 qualification type descriptor under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).
Age focus of qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Early childhood education and care qualifications that include curriculum and supervised work placement that cover the age range from birth to five years of age.
Supervised professional experience during qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ At least 120 hours of work placement in an early childhood setting.
Curriculum content of qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Equivalency will be assessed against the Community Services (CHC) national training packages (Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care): training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC30113. <p>ACECQA will consider the following four areas in the assessment process.</p> <p>Child development and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide care for babies and toddlers • Provide care for children • Promote and provide healthy food and drinks • Ensure the health and safety of children • Support the holistic development of children in early childhood. <p>Curriculum studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use an approved learning framework to guide practice • Provide experiences to support children’s play and learning • Use information about children to inform practice. <p>Early childhood professional practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and respond to children and young people at risk • Provide an emergency first aid response in an education and care setting • Develop positive and respectful relationships with children • Work within a legal and ethical framework • Participate in work health and safety. <p>Family and community contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work effectively with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples • Develop cultural competence.