



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority

DEVELOPING AND REVIEWING YOUR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN



Ongoing self-assessment against the National Quality Standard (NQS) drives continuous improvement in practice, and therefore leads to better quality outcomes for children.

Developing and reviewing your service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is an important part of this process, and also has related legislative requirements.

Under the [National Regulations](#), Regulation 31 and 55 stipulate a service QIP is required to be developed within three months of the service's approval, kept on site for inspection and include an assessment of the service's quality against the NQS and National Regulations. It also needs to identify areas for improvement, and contain the service's philosophy. Regulation 56 requires that the QIP be updated at least annually or as directed by the regulatory authority.

It is expected that the development or revision of your QIP would be informed by an open, honest and reflective self-assessment process.

ACECQA'S QIP TEMPLATE AND SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

The [ACECQA Quality Improvement Plan \(QIP\) template](#) and [Self-assessment Tool](#) are free and useful resources that can help you document your self-assessment process and outcomes, strengths and plan future improvements. You can use them to assess the quality of your service's performance in delivering quality education and care against the NQS and National Regulations.

The QIP template features links to resources for each quality area and a place for you to:

- record information about and tell the unique story of your service
- document your service's strengths
- reflect on practices within your service that have been identified align with the three Exceeding NQS themes
- document and plan for improvements in practice.

The ACECQA QIP template and Self-assessment Tool provide one approach to documenting your quality improvement journey. It is important to remember these are not mandated and educators and service leaders are encouraged to choose a process and format that suits the service's unique context, community, and self-assessment and planning approaches.

TIPS FOR WRITING AND REVIEWING YOUR QIP

- Identify the key priorities for your service and ensure your strategies and goals are achievable.

YOUR QIP SHOULD DEMONSTRATE YOUR ONGOING COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND HOW YOU WILL CONTINUE TO EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE QUALITY.

- While it is important to self-assess and reflect on current practice, policies and procedures against the seven quality areas, there is no expectation that all 15 standards and 40 elements must be addressed in the QIP at the same time.
- Your QIP should demonstrate your ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and how you will continue to explore opportunities to improve quality – this is especially important for services previously rated Meeting or Exceeding NQS.
- If your service is doing particularly well in one quality area you may choose to include statements about how this will be maintained and concentrate on other areas for improvement.
- Add the QIP as a standing agenda item for staff and parent meetings; this will allow the review to occur regularly, share improvement tasks, review quality areas and assess current practice. It also provides an opportunity to update the service team and families on the progress of improvements.
- Sharing tasks, including implementing improvement plans, reviewing quality areas and assessing current practice, associated with the QIP and discussing them as a service group has the potential to empower your service community members to contribute to the QIP.
- The [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#) is a great starting point for you to review your service operations and the reflective questions are useful to prompt discussion with children, educators, leaders, staff, families and stakeholders.

INCLUDE THE SERVICE COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN

- Your service community – including the children, families, educators, staff members, approved provider, service leaders and community members – can play an important role in the service's self-assessment and QIP review.
- It is particularly important to include the voices of the children in the review process. Examples of how this may occur can be found in the [ACECQA Newsletter](#) and [We Hear You blog](#).
- Consider how they may all be given a meaningful opportunity to collaborate with the review process. How might you capture this information and how can you share it with others, including the regulatory authority?

EXCEEDING NQS

As you complete your self-assessment and review, you may identify practice that is exceeding the expectations of the NQS. The Exceeding NQS sections provided within the ACECQA QIP template and Self-assessment Tool should be completed to identify evidence of one or more of the Exceeding NQS themes *impacting on practice* at the service.

When your QIP is submitted to the regulatory authority for assessment and rating, an authorised officer will consider how the evidence you have documented impacts on the practices at the service, to determine if the Exceeding NQS themes are evident for that standard.

For further information on the three Exceeding themes, including case studies that offer high quality practical and illustrative examples of Exceeding NQS practice for each standard, see the ACECQA's [Exceeding the NQS](#) webpage.

WHO REQUIRES ACCESS TO YOUR QIP?

- Your state or territory regulatory authority will request your QIP as part of your service's assessment and rating process or at any other time. This is a great opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to continuous improvement, and to showcase service strengths and achievements prior to the assessment and rating visit occurring.
- The QIP is required to be made available to families of enrolled children, and families who are thinking of enrolling in your service.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

Visit the ACECQA website at acecqa.gov.au to download:

- [Quality Improvement Plan template](#)
- [Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Find other useful resources:

- [Quality Improvement Plan](#)
- [National Law and Regulations](#)
- [Approved learning frameworks](#)

For more information on how your state or territory regulatory authority regulates education and care services including how they may use your QIP, contact them via the details on the [ACECQA website](#).