

Information sheet

BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING

Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning

Critical reflection is a process of meaning making that involves a deeper level of thinking and evaluation. A robust culture of critical reflection involves educator teams, children and families in an ongoing review cycle.

As professionals, educators are committed to lifelong learning and seek out opportunities to strengthen their professional knowledge and skills to support continuous quality improvement in practice.

This information sheet provides a summary of the amendments to the *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0, 2022* (EYLF V2.0) Principle, [Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning](#). It provides you with reflective questions as you consider your practice, service philosophy and children's program in relation to this Principle.



[Links to the National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#)

The NQS recognises the potential of the educational program and practices to enhance each child's learning and development. The EYLF V2.0 Principle, Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning is reflected in several quality areas of the NQS, with a particular focus in:

QA1: Educational program and practice

Element 1.2.1: Intentional teaching – Educators are deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful in their decisions and actions.

Standard 1.3: Assessment and planning – Educators and co-ordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.

QA4: Staffing arrangements

Standard 4.2: Professionalism – Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical.

QA7: Governance and Leadership

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

Standard 7.2: Leadership – Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community.

What is the change?

- The Principle name has been updated to Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning.
- Critical reflection is clearly defined as a process involving colleagues, children and families.
- Additional information has been added to support critical reflection in everyday practice.
- New content has been added describing educators as professionals committed to lifelong learning to support critical reflection and practice improvements.

Rationale for the change

- The expansion of this Principle strengthens critical reflection as a part of everyday professional practice.
- This Principle focuses on critical reflection as a critical practice to drive continuous quality improvement in early childhood education and care.

What this looks like in practice?

- Regular team meetings, or similar opportunities, occur which include a cycle of inquiry that collaboratively affirms, challenges, supports and provides opportunities for team members to learn from each other, share new information and further develop the team's skills.
- All educators collaboratively reflect, explore, identify and evaluate diverse perspectives with respect to their own settings and contexts to inform future practice so that children and families benefit.
- Educators question established practices and think about why they are working in particular ways. They have opportunities to engage in deep thinking about pedagogy, equity and children's wellbeing.
- The service team welcomes, reflects and draws on the voices, priorities and strengths of the children and families at the service.
- Educators are committed to their own ongoing professional learning and development, actively seeking out opportunities to develop capabilities and collaborating with colleagues on service practices.
- Team members are provided with professional development strategies that challenge and extend their thinking. Ongoing learning can take many forms, including:
 - » professional learning experiences within settings such as professional conversations within teams, coaching and mentoring, professional reading, practitioner inquiry and participating in collaborative research projects
 - » learning opportunities offered by others, such as pursuing further study, attending professional conferences and completing professional learning programs.

- Educators demonstrate a commitment to learn regardless of their experience, knowledge and skills.
- Educators share their new knowledge and skills gained through professional learning experiences and encourage and support the ongoing learning of others.

Reflective questions and provocations

- How does your service philosophy guide your approach to critical reflection and ongoing professional development?
 - » ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA1 Developing a culture of learning through reflective practice](#)
- How do you and the team engage in critical reflective practices to support and encourage each other, support ongoing learning and focus on quality improvement?
 - » ACECQA – [Educational leadership videos](#)
- What questions do you have about your work? What are you challenged by? What are you curious about? What are you confronted by in relation to your own biases?
 - » Elizabeth M. Anderson – [Transforming Early Childhood Education through Critical Reflection](#)
- How is critical reflection used to challenge beliefs/biases?
 - » ACECQA – [We hear you blog – The journey towards critical reflection](#)
- What opportunities do you provide for educators, teachers, co-ordinators and other staff to have conversations and discussions to further develop their skills, or to improve practice and relationships? How do you ensure that everyone's voice is heard and considered?
 - » ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA4 Belonging, being and becoming for educators](#)
- What strategies have you developed to build and maintain community partnerships that strengthen the professional learning community and support continuous quality improvement, enhancing outcomes for children, families, and the service team?
 - » ACECQA – [We hear you blog – Developing a professional learning community](#)
- What strategies are in place to ensure each team member's professional development plan aligns with the service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)?
 - » ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA7 Supporting performance and the development of professionals](#)

ACECQA references and resources

- ACECQA – Information sheet: Quality Area 4 – [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0 \(EYLF\)](#)
- ACECQA – [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- ACECQA – [Critical reflection in practice \(YouTube\)](#)
- ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA1 Developing a culture of learning through reflective practice](#)
- ACECQA – Information sheet – [Meetings and reflective sessions](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – The journey towards critical reflection](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – Understanding critical reflection](#)
- ACECQA – [Summary sheet – What is critical reflection?](#)
- ACECQA – [We hear you blog – Developing a professional learning community](#)
- ACECQA – [Information sheet – QA4 Belonging, being and becoming for educators](#)

Other references and resources

- Elizabeth M. Anderson – [Transforming Early Childhood Education through Critical Reflection](#)