



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority

REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY DAY CARE EDUCATORS

FROM 1 OCT 2017*

*In all states and territories except Western Australia which will commence by 1 Oct 2018

The Australian, state and territory education Ministers have agreed to changes to the National Quality Framework (NQF).

This information sheet explains some of the changes and continuing requirements for family day care educators.

WHEN DO THE CHANGES START?

Most changes will commence 1 October 2017 in all states and territories (except Western Australia which will commence by 1 October 2018).

The revised National Quality Standard (NQS) and some related changes will commence 1 February 2018.

WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

Visit acecqa.gov.au/nqf-changes

Visit your regulatory authority website acecqa.gov.au/contact-your-regulatory-authority

Notifications

As a family day care (FDC) educator you must notify your approved provider of:

- any renovations or changes to your residence or venue that could create a serious risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of children
- any serious incident
- any complaint alleging a serious incident has occurred or is occurring at the service
- any complaint alleging the National Law and National Regulations have been breached
- any new person aged 18 and over residing at the residence.
- any circumstance that may affect whether a person residing at the residence continues to be fit and proper to be in the company of children.

Approved providers also have obligations to notify the regulatory authority.

Sleep and rest policies

Your FDC service must have a policy and procedure for sleep and rest, including safe sleeping practices. You are required to follow the sleep and rest policy and procedures.

Visit the ACECQA website for guidance to support you to meet these requirements:
acecqa.gov.au/nqf-changes/information-sheets-and-resources

Risk assessments and authorisations

As a FDC educator you are required to conduct risk assessments for all excursions. Where an excursion is a regular outing, a risk assessment must be conducted at least every 12 months, or whenever the risks of that excursion change.

Educator assistants

With approval from your approved provider, your educator assistant can only stand in your place as the educator:

- to transport children between your residence or venue, to a school, another education and care service or children's service, or a child's home
- in emergency situations, including when you require urgent medical care or treatment

- to enable you to attend an appointment (other than a regular appointment) in unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, if the absence is for less than 4 hours; and the approved provider has approved that absence; and notice of that absence has been given to the parents of the child.

FDC educator assistants may also assist you while you are educating and caring for children as part of the FDC service.

Parents must provide written consent for the educator assistant to assist you in these ways. You must give these consents to your approved provider.

Co-ordinator to educator ratios

An approved provider of a FDC service must have a person employed to monitor and support you as a family day care educator. This is the co-ordinator.

A mandatory minimum co-ordinator to educator ratio will be introduced to ensure you have adequate support to maintain a high standard of quality education and care.

From 1 October 2017, the following ratios will apply to new FDC services.

Co-ordinator (full-time equivalent) to FDC educator ratios:

- 1:15 for the first 12 months the service is operating
- 1:25 after the first 12 months of operation.

The regulatory authority may impose the higher ratio of 1:15 at any time after the first 12 months of operation.

What if a service already has a ratio of co-ordinators to educators as a condition of approval?

Existing conditions continue to apply to these services.

What if a service does not currently have a ratio of co-ordinators to educators?

The regulatory authority can impose a co-ordinator to educator ratio condition before 1 October 2017, and this ratio will continue to apply after 1 October 2017.

For services without a ratio at 1 October 2017, the legislation includes a saving provision that allows the service to continue to operate until 1 October 2018, after which the 1:25 ratio will apply, unless a different ratio is applied by the regulatory authority before 1 October 2017.

REVISED NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

A revised NQS will be introduced 1 February 2018 to help clarify how quality is rated in education and care services.

- The number of standards of the NQS has been reduced from 18 to 15, and the elements from 58 to 40.
- The language is clearer, and each standard and element now describes a unique concept.
- Services will be assessed and rated against the revised NQS from 1 February 2018. If a quality assessment visit starts before 1 February 2018, the service rating will be completed against the current NQS, and any review of this rating will also be against the current NQS.

For more information see the *Revised NQS information sheet* on the ACECQA website at: acecqa.gov.au/nqf-changes

Acknowledgment

The information in this publication is accurate pending the Australian, state and territory education Ministers' agreement to amended regulations.