

Service Name: _____

Date Commenced: _____

NQF Workbook example

This example version includes (1) Index & quick reference guide, (2) Introduction and (3) a sample chapter and activities. To purchase the full version in hard copy, contact Gowrie SA Phone 08 8234 5219 or email train@gowriesa.org.au



Gowrie
South Australia

*A practical tool for education and care services
transitioning to the National Quality Framework*

<i>Index & Quick Reference Guide</i>	<i>page 1</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>page 2</i>
<i>NQF Action Plan</i>	<i>page 4</i>
<i>Glossary of terms</i>	<i>page 6</i>
<i>Section 1: Getting to Know the NQF</i>	<i>page 8</i>
<i>Section 2: What is different about the NQF</i>	<i>page 21</i>
<i>Section 3: Meeting requirements under the NQF</i>	<i>page 35</i>
<i>Section 4: Leading implementation of the NQF</i>	<i>page 53</i>
<i>Section 5: Risk assessment for the NQF</i>	<i>page 64</i>
<i>Section 6: Evaluation, review and continuous improvement</i>	<i>page 69</i>
<i>Recommended further readings and references</i>	<i>page 79</i>
<i>Activities</i>	<i>page 81</i>

Overview of the NQF Handbook

This NQF Workbook is a practical guide for education and care services including Long Day Care, Preschool, Outside School Hours Care and Family Day care that uses an action plan approach to support the transition to the National Quality Framework. It is presented in a workbook style that enables services to plan for and work through implementation of change, document work for quality assurance purposes, undertake risk analysis, and it supports the initial development of a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

It is helpful to remember that you have already been working within quality assurance and regulatory systems. This Workbook will guide your service through the required changes while building on your existing practices.

Who is it for?

This NQF Workbook is aimed at leaders, directors, managers, owners and family day care coordinators to lead their education and care services and teams/schemes through successful transition to the National Quality Framework (NQF).

How do I use it?

This NQF Workbook is designed in a workbook style. You can work through the tool from start to finish, undertaking recommended actions and documenting your progress. There are spaces in the Workbook for you to write notes, record your actions and plan for specific activities to engage your educators and community.

Included in the Workbook are suggested strategies and activities to involve educators in implementing changes. There is an opportunity to develop your own comprehensive action plan using the template supplied that systematically progresses through each section of this Workbook. The work undertaken can then be linked to your service's Quality Improvement Plan.

The NQF Workbook has 6 sections:

- Section 1: Getting to know the National Quality Framework
- Section 2: What is different about the NQF?
- Section 3: Meeting the NQF Requirements
- Section 4: Leading the NQF
- Section 5: Risk analysis for the NQF
- Section 6: Evaluation, Review & Continuous Improvement

Why do we need a National Quality Framework?

The Australian Government's National Reform Agenda vision is that by 2020, all children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and the nation.

The main aim of the National Quality Framework is to provide a more consistent and higher standard of education and care for children - firstly by generally improving those elements of quality that research says are vital (ratios, qualifications of educators) and by encouraging services to work towards continual improvement. This includes stronger relationships between educators and children, stronger partnerships with families, inclusion of all children, consistency of programs, making links with local communities and stronger management and leadership of programs.

Another aim of the National Quality Framework is to provide clearer and more comprehensive information to families about the quality of education and care at their service and what it looks like. With this information services and families can work together to provide a better service for children, families and educators, focused on continuous improvement.

For services and educators, the National Quality Framework will mean working with better ratios, having more time for individual children, having a more qualified workforce, and opportunities for educators to increase their own qualifications. It is expected that services will gain a clearer understanding of where their service is at and the improvements required. It will mean having simplified licensing/regulation/accreditation processes and services will only need to deal with one agency.

The Professional Support Coordinator Alliance has developed an online information session with an overview of the National Quality Framework. This can be accessed for free from www.pscalliance.org.au.

The NQF Action Plan

On the following pages you will find an Action Plan template to support your service or scheme with implementing required changes for the National Quality Framework.

Included in the Action Plan are the key actions that you will need to undertake to transition to the NQF. This Action Plan has been designed to link with each section and activities included in this Workbook, allowing you to work systematically through the transitional requirements, while documenting your progress and actions along the way. Any areas you identify for further improvement or action can be copied and included in your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), due for completion by 30 April 2012.

As you progress through this Workbook and make notes, you will be starting to collect documentation and evidence which will support your service's assessment against the National Quality Standard (NQS).

The idea is to write directly onto this Action Plan in this Workbook, to make it specific for your service or scheme and include any additional actions you identify as you work through the NQF Workbook.

NQF Workbook – Activities

There are activities listed throughout the NQF Workbook.

As you work through each section and undertake the activities, write a summary using the 'Activity Record'. You can use this to support your documentation and evidence for the NQF.

Each activity is also listed on the Action Plan and can be inserted into your Quality Improvement Plan.

The full details and instructions for each activity are listed in the back of the NQF Workbook. All activities are numbered for ease of reference.

Making the changes needed for NQF will be easier if you have a whole of service or scheme plan with realistic time frames that everyone can understand

NQF REQUIREMENTS: The National Quality Framework will be introduced over a transition period to give services time to plan their approach and make changes gradually. Adult:child ratios are gradually being improved over the next few years along with qualification requirements for educators. It is important that services plan their approach in line with the requirements and time frames set out in the National Quality Framework. Services need to consider not only the actions they will need to take, but who needs to be part of the process including leaders, educators, children, families, communities and management.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT? The changes are being made gradually so you will have time to plan and adjust. If you plan your approach for transition to the National Quality Framework using the suggested time lines and actions in this resource it will reduce the impact of the changes on your service.

Key documents for the National Quality Framework

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Framework
- Guide to the National Law and National Regulations
- Guide to the National Quality Standard
- Guide to Developing a Quality Improvement Plan and Template
- Belonging Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework
- My Time, Our Place: The Framework for School Aged Care

These documents can be downloaded from the ACECQA website www.acecqa.gov.au.

Activity 9 – Playing with words

Helping all educators become familiar with the meanings of words that may be new, deepens our understanding of the key concepts and therefore helps us to talk more effectively about what we do and why. This is also a useful exercise for identifying professional learning priorities and quality improvements. When faced with change, it is important to provide opportunities for educators to express their feelings about it. At the same time it is also helpful to find fun and interesting ways to explore new documents and terminology because this allows for a more positive experience. Refer to the activities section at the back of this Workbook (p 92) for instructions. Document actions using the activity record below.

Playing with words

Who was involved?

Summary of discussion:

Key ideas:

example

Implications and actions for Quality Improvement Plan:

Who will be responsible?

To be completed by:

Other notes/comments:

NOTES:

example

Preparing for the Assessment Visit

You will need to reflect on your service's practices and undertake self assessment against each of the seven Quality Areas. You then need to identify strengths as well as the key areas in which improvements are to be made. There is no set format for self assessment and it does not need to be submitted to the Authorised Officer.

The assessment visit is designed to observe typical practice at your service. An Authorised Officer will visit your service and observe practice, have discussions with leaders and educators and request to see documentation and evidence.

The **Guide to the National Quality Standard** provides an overview of each Standard and Element including requirements and examples of what Authorised Officers will want to observe, discuss with educators or see documentation when determining ratings. When undertaking the self assessment process, you should include your service's strengths and areas for improvement into your Quality Improvement Plan.

Certified and Nominated Supervisors

Every service must have a **Nominated Supervisor**. A Nominated Supervisor will also be a Certified Supervisor. The Nominated Supervisor must accept the designation in writing. The Nominated Supervisor is generally the manager or director of a service who is in charge of day to day operations of the service.

A **Certified Supervisor** will have a supervisor certificate. They can be placed in the day-to-day charge of the service when the Nominated Supervisor is not present (in an acting role) if they:

- are designated by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor, and
- accept the designation in writing

Activity 10 – Who does what? Search and find

Having a clear understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities supports effective communication, accountability and underpins trust between people. This activity will help you identify what's required and provide opportunities to air ideas and feelings about what's possible. The documentation you keep may also serve as a resource to plan a job and position description. Refer to the activities section at the back of this Workbook (p 93) for instructions. Document actions using the activity record below.

Who does what? Search and find

Who was involved?

Summary of discussion:

example

Key ideas:

Implications and actions for Quality Improvement Plan:

Who will be responsible?

To be completed by:

Other notes/comments:

Nominating an Educational Leader

The NQF requires a suitably qualified and experienced educator to lead the implementation of the education program. This includes developing the motivation for team engagement and achievement based on high expectations.

In the National Regulations, Regulation 118 'Educational Leader' states that "the approved provider of an education and care service must designate, in writing, a suitably qualified and experienced educator, coordinator or other individual as educational leader at the service to lead the development and implementation of educational programs in the service" (National Regulations, pg 112).

Effective curriculum development requires ambitious goals and clarity of purpose. Educational leaders play a crucial role in provoking professional conversations whether these are formal (such as part of a staff meeting) or informal and occur throughout the day. An educational leader shares the thinking behind their practice with others, poses questions to reflect on, helps and supports others facing challenges, monitors programs and educators performance, identifies changes needed and works with others in planning for and implementing change.

example

Activity 11 – Promoting learning

This activity is designed to help you prepare for the transition to NQF by helping everyone to understand the term ‘pedagogy’. As you work through the activity, you will develop some shared understandings about the many ways children’s learning is supported. It’s important that all educators are part of this because Authorised Officers will want to observe and discuss this during assessment visits. This activity is also aimed at building strong and connected teams. It is a particularly valuable exercise for the educators nominated as the educational leader because it provides one possible way of working that might get them started in learning how to lead pedagogical conversations. Refer to the activities section at the back of this Workbook (p 94) for instructions. Document actions using the activity record below.

Promoting learning

Who was involved?

Summary of discussion:

example

Key ideas:

Implications and actions for QIP:

Who will be responsible?

To be completed by:

Other notes/comments:

Developing strategies to involve and consult with children and families

With the changes introduced by the NQF, it is important that you are providing information to, and discussing service changes with families. Just as you need information about what the NQF will mean for your service/s, families also need information about what it will mean for them and the impact on the care and education of their children.

Partnerships with children and families help to create a strong, inclusive community within the service. It is important that children and families have opportunities to influence and shape the service and that they are consulted and their views listened to in planning and decision making. This includes providing opportunities for children and families to talk about what is important to them, promoting a sense of community within the service.

In transitioning to NQF we must always remember that the key purpose for any change we make is to make it easier for educators to support children towards the broad learning outcomes identified in the Learning Frameworks. It is easy to get lost in the process of making changes to meet the new requirements and lose sight of the reason for change. Ultimately these changes are important because of the impact they will have on children. The changes are about improving outcomes for children. While you work through understanding and exploring the NQF, make sure you stop and check that you are considering how changes might affect children.

example

Activity 12 – Y Chart – who are we doing this for?

In transitioning to the NQF we must always remember that the key purpose for any change we make is to improve educators' practices to support children towards the broad learning outcomes identified in the Learning Frameworks. This activity makes sure we keep our eyes on the main goal of outcomes for children so that we are continuing to improve and provide positive experiences for children. This process starts with educators considering some guiding questions, but can be a very effective way of creating space for children and families to think along with you, meaning all voices will be heard. Refer to the activities section at the back of this Workbook (p 95) for instructions. Document actions using the activity record below.

Y Chart – who are we doing this for?

Who was involved?

Summary of discussion:

example

Key ideas:

Implications and actions for Quality Improvement Plan:

Who will be responsible?

To be completed by:

Other notes/comments:

Activity 12: Y Chart – who are we doing this for?

Rationale

In transitioning to the NQF we must always remember that the key purpose for any change we make is to improve educators' practices to support children towards the broad learning outcomes identified in the Learning Frameworks. This activity makes sure we keep our eyes on the main goal of outcomes for children so that we are continuing to improve and provide positive experiences for children. This process starts with educators considering some guiding questions, but can be a very effective way of creating space for children and families to think along with you, meaning all voices will be heard.

Estimated time: 30 minutes

People involved: All educators (children and families where appropriate)

Resources required: Large paper and pens
Copy of the Y Chart template from
www.globaleducation.edna.edu.au/globaled/go/engineName/filemanager/pid/3427/ychart.pdf;jsessionid=AFA4F8A1379C238415EB2BFA857F8E2A?actionreq=actionFileDownload&fid=22859.

Procedure:

1. Copy the template provided
2. Display the following question (or another question that is relevant to your setting) "When we have met the National Quality Standard, children will see..." ("looks like"). Ask each person write down their thoughts and ideas. Add these ideas to the Y Chart
3. Display the following question (or another question that is relevant to your setting) "When we have met the National Quality Standard children will hear..." ("sounds like"). Ask each person write down their thoughts and ideas. Add these ideas to the Y Chart
4. Display the following question (or another question that is relevant to your setting) "When we have met the National Quality Standard for children it will feel" ("feels like"). Ask each person write down their thoughts and ideas. Add these ideas to the Y Chart
5. Document your new insights and future actions in the Activity Record on page 43