

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: ASSESSMENT AND RATING

1. What are the changes to Assessment and Rating visits in Tasmania?

From 1st May 2023, the ECU will be implementing changes to A&R visits. These changes are being made to align with national changes and include;

- reduced notice period of 1-5 days
- an increase in the use of partial reassessments (for services with a current 2018 NQS rating) a greater focus on the service's self-assessment and Quality Improvement processes.

For further information about the changes to A&R visits in Tasmania, see the [ECU Information Sheet](#).

2. Why are the changes being implemented?

These changes are intended to make Assessment and Rating more efficient and effective for providers and services and support the provision of current information on service quality for families.

For more information, see the [ACECQA information sheet](#).

3. When we will be notified that our service is going to go through A&R?

Services and providers will be notified of an upcoming Assessment and Rating 1-5 days before commencement of the visit. Authorised Officers (AOs) will contact approved providers and services by telephone and email.

For further information about the A&R process please see the [ACECQA website](#) and the [Guide to the NQF](#).

4. Will my service be advised whether the A&R is a full assessment of all 7 Quality Areas of the NQS or a partial reassessment?

The AO will discuss whether the assessment is a full or partial reassessment and explain which standards or Quality Areas of the NQS will be assessed during the notification phone call. However, if at any time during the A&R process, if the AO feels additional areas should be included, they will advise the service and start gathering evidence for these areas also.

5. Where can I find further information about the A&R process?

For more detailed information on changes to A&R in Tasmania please see the [ECU Information Sheet](#).

Further information about the overall Assessment and Rating process can be found on the [ACECQA Website](#), on the ECU's [Assessment and Rating page](#) and in the [Guide to the National Quality Standard](#) Assessment and Rating chapter.

6. What should we do if we disagree with the draft rating decision?

The approved provider has 10 working days from receiving the report, to provide feedback. Feedback should address any factual inaccuracies in the draft report and, where possible, be supported by additional evidence such as photos or copies of documents.

Feedback should be evidence-based and submitted through the NQAITS portal, or via email to the ECU using the template provided with the report.

Further information about the feedback process, including the feedback template, can be found on the [ACECQA website](#) the ECU has also developed a [fact sheet](#) on providing feedback on your Assessment and Rating Report.

7. How should we use our Assessment and Rating report to support continuous improvement?

Sharing the A&R report, or parts of it, with families and other stakeholders provides an opportunity for reflection, feedback and meaningful engagement to inform the service's continuous improvement.

Reports also include Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) notes which are recommendations which services may like to consider as part of their QIP. QIP notes will vary between services and may contain aspirational ideas or suggestions.

Services may wish to use their A&R Report in conjunction with [ACECQA's Self-Assessment Tool](#), to reflect on service strengths and opportunities for quality improvement.

[ACECQA's Self-assessment Tool](#) is an optional tool suitable for all service types and provides a process that services may choose to apply or adapt in a way that meets the needs of their unique service context.

8. We have just been through A&R, when will we receive our report?

Draft A&R Reports are usually sent to the service via email approximately 5 weeks after the A&R Visit.

Services then have 10 working days to provide feedback on any factual inaccuracies in the report and evidence to support their feedback. Further information on the feedback process can be found on the [ECU feedback information sheet](#) and the [Assessment and Rating Draft Report Feedback Template](#) is available on the [ACECQA website](#).

9. Practice at our service has changed significantly since our last A&R, should we apply for a reassessment?

If you feel your service quality has changed since your last A&R visit, please discuss this with your Authorised Officer. Services may apply for reassessment although there is a fee involved if the process is initiated by the service.

Information regarding the Reassessment and Re-rating process can be found on the [ACECQA website](#).

More detailed information on reassessment and re-rating, and the application process, can be found within the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

10. We have lost our notice of ratings certificate; is there a way we can get another?

Services can now download their Notice of Ratings certificate through the NQAITS portal.

11. Where can I find information and resources to support the development of our service's QIP?

Information about developing a QIP can be found on the [ACECQA Website](#) including information sheets on:

- [developing and reviewing your QIP](#),
- practical ideas to support continuous improvement.

ACECQA has also developed an [online module](#).

ACECQA's [Self-Assessment Tool](#) can also be used to reflect on service strengths and opportunities for quality improvement.

ACECQA's [Self-assessment Tool](#) is an optional tool suitable for all service types and provides a process that services may choose to apply or adapt in a way that meets the needs of their unique service context.

Further information is available in the [Guide to the NQF](#).

12. Where can I find information about how to submit or update my service's QIP through the NQAITS portal?

The [ECU website](#) has an [information sheet](#), a [tip sheet](#) and an [instructional video](#) to support you in this process.

13. Where can I find more information about NQS Quality Ratings?

The [Assessment and Rating page](#) on the [ECU website](#) and the [Assessment and Rating process page](#) on the [ACECQA website](#) contain information about quality ratings.

The [ACECQA website](#) includes a collection of resources developed for service leaders to assist them in meeting the NQS.

ACECQA has recently released a number of resources related to [Exceeding the NQS](#) including updates to the exceeding information in the Guide to the NQF, reflective questions for services and questions used by AOs in determining whether a service has demonstrated exceeding themes, as well as a number of case studies.

14. How often are Assessment and Rating visits conducted?

To focus our resources on services most in need of support, the ECU take a responsive and risk-based approach to scheduling A&R visits. Services with a lower rating are usually assessed and rated more frequently. Services with a higher rating will generally have a longer period of time between A&R visits.

Services may also be scheduled for an A&R when there has been a change which could impact on the service's quality, such as a change in provider or management or events have occurred at the service which may indicate a change in quality at the service, such as serious incidents, complaints or compliance action.

Further information on the frequency of the A&R cycle can be found in the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

15. The AO conducting our visit already knows our service really well, do I still have to share information with them?

Although the AO conducting your A&R visit may be familiar with your service, it is important to remember that their rating recommendation will be based on the evidence collected during the A&R visit. Even if you believe the AO already knows about educators, events, programs or initiatives at the service, you should still share this information with them.

Guidance on the evidence AOs will sight, observe and discuss during the A&R visit, is available in the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

16. Can we get a hard copy of our A&R Report?

To support sustainable practice, the ECU no longer automatically provide hard copies of the A&R report with the Notice of Rating Certificate. When services receive the electronic version of the final A&R Report, they will have the option to request a hard copy of the report be sent with the Notice of Rating Certificate.

17. Where can I get more information?

For further information about the Assessment and Rating processes, please read the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#), and the ECU Information Sheets [Changes to Assessment and Rating in 2023](#) and [Assessment and Rating Process Post-Visit](#).

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