



EDUCATION AND CARE

Assessment and Rating

Information sheet 2023

The [Education and Care Unit \(ECU\)](#) is responsible for assessing and rating approved Tasmanian Education and Care services against the seven quality areas of the [National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#).

A general overview of the [Assessment and Rating process](#) and information about quality ratings is available on the [ACECOA website](#).

From May 2023, the ECU is implementing changes to how we conduct Assessment and Rating visits in Tasmania, in line with [national changes](#).

Reduced Notice periods

Providers and services will be contacted by telephone 1-5 days prior to an Assessment and Rating (A&R) visit.

Partial Reassessments

There will be an increased use of partial reassessments for services with a 2018 NQS rating. A partial reassessment is when some (but not all) of the quality areas or standards of the NQS are considered as part of a reassessment.

Some services will need to undergo a full Assessment and Rating before they can be considered for a partial reassessment, these include services rated under the 2012 NQS, services who are Not Yet Assessed and services who have undergone an approved provider transfer.

Submitting your Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

The ECU is requested that all services submit their QIP through the NQAITS portal, using an RAI01 form. For more information about this process please see [Submitting your QIP through the NQAITS](#).

Before the Assessment and Rating

Notification and preparation for the visit

The Authorised Officer (AO) conducting the A&R will contact the approved provider and the service 1-5 days prior to the visit. During this call the AO will discuss the areas for assessment or reassessment and the date/s of the onsite and virtual visit (if required.) Following on from this discussion, an email will be sent to the approved provider and service to confirm the dates. The AO will use your service's QIP and information on NQAITS to inform their visit plan and desktop review (the process of gathering evidence about a service, prior to the visit.)

Update your QIP

The AO will access the service's QIP that is available on the NQAITS portal. You may wish to provide an updated copy if changes have been made. For more information about this process, please see [Submitting your QIP through NQAITS](#).

During your Assessment and Rating

A&R structure

The Tasmanian approach for Assessment and Rating is made up of three components: Sight, Observe and Discuss.

Sight

AOs will sight service documentation during the visit and provide opportunities for you to share documentation before or for up to 1 business day after the conclusion of the A&R. The ECU will provide guidance regarding the types of documentation you should share with the AO.

Observe

The Observation component is vital in demonstrating the quality of interactions, environments and service practice.

Discuss

Services can discuss service practice during a virtual connection after the visit, or in person, provided that service has a suitable space. This discussion provides an additional opportunity to share information about practice and systems at your service.

Evidence collection

During the Assessment and Rating process, the AO will record evidence in their instrument and during the onsite visit may take photographs of documents and environments, in keeping with the guidelines in the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

During a partial reassessment, the AO will collect evidence for the standards or Quality Areas advised in the notification letter. However, if at any time during the A&R process, the AO observes practice which indicates additional areas should be reassessed, they will advise the service and begin gathering evidence for these areas.

Compliance concerns

If the AO notes any compliance concerns or practice within the service which does not meet the minimum requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF), they will make the service aware of these issues prior to the end of the Assessment and Rating process. For minor concerns, or those which do not impact on children's health, wellbeing and safety, the AO may offer the service a minor adjustment and/or issue a compliance caution. Further information about minor adjustments is available in the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Visit timeframes and structure

A number of factors are considered when determining the length and structure of A&R visits. These include, but are not limited to, the range and number of NQS standards or Quality Areas being assessed or reassessed, the size of the service, the service's layout and design and the number of children and staff. The AO will advise if they need extra time to gather evidence. The AO will also request any additional documentation be sent through within 1 business day of the visit, to be considered in their rating recommendation.

Following your A&R

Rating recommendation

After completing the three components of your service's A&R, the AO will analyse the evidence they have gathered and make a rating recommendation. As no ratings are made until after the moderation stage of the process, AOs are unable to provide information about rating outcomes during the A&R.

The draft Assessment and Rating report

Following the rating recommendation, the AO will prepare a draft report. Before reports are sent to providers, the ECU undertake a robust moderation process to review the draft report and confirm the evidence reflects practice at the service, supports the rating recommendations, and is consistent with the benchmarks of the [National Quality Standard](#).

Feedback

The approved provider can give feedback on any factual inaccuracies in the draft report and provide evidence to support feedback within 10 business days. Further guidance on providing feedback is available in the [Feedback Information Sheet](#) and on the [ACECOA website](#).

Final report and ratings published

Any feedback is considered before the final report is finalised and issued. The ECU will email and also send a hard copy of the Notice of Rating certificate, which must be displayed at the service. Once the review period has ended, the final ratings are published on the national registers.

Further information

Please see the [ACECOA information sheet](#), the [ECU changes in A&R information sheet](#) or the [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#) for more information about changes to the Assessment and Rating process.

Contact details

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