





## Activity

Pick a standard of the NQS and divide into pairs and practice interviewing each other about service policies and procedures relevant to practice within that standard.

E.g. Standard 2.1 Each child's health is promoted.

How do your service policies and procedures support the three Exceeding NQS themes for this standard selected?



## Activity

Go into the service and take a picture of something you think shows evidence of any of the Exceeding NQS themes in practice in relation to any standard of the NQS.

E.g. how the physical environment has been shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or community.



## Activity

If you were to survey all families using the service what do you think would be the top response if they were asked how they are meaningfully engaging with the service?

What would be the value of knowing this information?

Write three questions about meaningful engagement you could ask families.

Why not ask them and see if they come back with the response/s you thought they would.



## Activity

You've been asked to lead a discussion at the next staff meeting about aiming for an Exceeding NQS rating for Quality Area 5.

How will you approach this request and what resources might you use?



## Activity

List the first 10 things you can think of at your service that would demonstrate that practice is embedded in service operation?



## Activity

Exceeding NQS theme 2 is: Practice is informed by critical reflection.

In pairs, list five practices that have changed at your service based on critical reflection.



## Activity

How could you use the complaints handling procedure at your service to demonstrate practice against one or more of the Exceeding NQS themes?



## Activity

Form small groups and draw one of the following topics from a hat:

- Local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities
- Support services
- Sustainability organisations

In your group come up with ways your service could more meaningfully engage with these community groups?





## Activity

Each person take a turn to share a critical reflection that has shaped their practice.

During an assessment and rating visit how do you think you could share this information with the assessor/s?



## Activity

A rating of Exceeding NQS means going 'above and beyond' what is expected at the Meeting NQS level for a standard.

List some of the ways you think going 'above and beyond' supports quality practice at the service and better outcomes for children and families?



## Activity

Part three of the Guide to the National Quality Framework includes indicators for Exceeding NQS for each standard of the NQS.

Pick a standard of the NQS, and have a look at the Guide for that standard, consider the indicators and then list examples of practice at your service that reflect or align with those indicators.



## Activity

In pairs, explain how your service incorporates children's voices in regard to practice:

- being embedded in service operations
- informed by critical reflection
- being shaped meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.



## Activity

What are the three Exceeding NQS themes?

What are some of the ways that each of the Exceeding NQS themes support high quality practice and outcomes?



## Activity

If 'practice' is application, in what ways could you demonstrate/evidence your practice to an assessor during an assessment and rating visit?



## Activity

Describe critical reflection without using the words 'critical reflection'.



## Activity

Brainstorm a list of ideas on what practice embedded in service operations means?





## Scenario

A family at your service has recently had a new baby. The older sibling of the baby attends your service a couple of days a week.

The older sibling's behaviour has changed and they are now acting out in a physically aggressive way towards some of the other children in the room.

How could your approach to this situation also demonstrate how you are meeting some of the expectations from the Exceeding NQS themes?



## Scenario

There has been a complaint at your service that an educator in your room is abrupt when raising concerns about children with families.

How might you approach this, and how does the way you approach it demonstrate that practice is:

- being embedded in service operations
- informed by critical reflection
- being shaped meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.



## Scenario

An educator wants to build a relationship with a local nursing home because her grandfather is at the nursing home.

In terms of meaningful engagement, how do you approach this?

Think about ways you could build on this idea to create a meaningful engagement opportunity for the children and families at the service as well as the residents?



## Scenario

Your service has decided to trial a new approach to the assessment and planning cycle.

One of the room leaders is opposed to this change as he says that it means things aren't embedded anymore.

Discuss the room leader's concerns and why change doesn't always mean things aren't still embedded?



## Scenario

You are a new Director in a service and during your first staff meeting the educators can't agree on areas for quality improvement.

How could critical reflection assist you to support educators to move forward?



## Scenario

You've been asked to consider how families and/or the community could meaningfully engage in relation to Standard 4.1: Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development.

What are some strategies that you could consider to do this?



## Scenario

An educator states to another educator, 'nothing is embedded in this place'.

How might you respond?

What strategies might you consider to address this?



## Scenario

During an assessment and rating visit the assessor asks how you've been able to ensure that practice has remained embedded in the service noting that you've had three new educators starting in the last couple of months.





## Scenario

Your service has been attempting to engage with families using paper based feedback forms with little success.

What strategies might you introduce to better ensure meaningful engagement that is shaping practice?



## Scenario

The long-term Director/Nominated Supervisor of the service is leaving. What strategies might you consider to ensure continuity of knowledge/trust/relationships within the service?



## Scenario

As a team you've been reflecting on ways that critical reflection can be demonstrated beyond just writing it all down.

What are some of the ways you think you can do this?



## True or False?

There is a 'recipe' for Exceeding NQS.

**False.** Services should demonstrate Exceeding NQS practice for any of the NQS standards in ways that suit their particular operating environment and approach to practice.



## Scenario

During a self-assessment of the service against the NQS you identify that there are some areas that you feel demonstrate practice at the Exceeding NQS level.

How might you highlight these in your Quality Improvement Plan?



## Scenario

Your most recent assessment and rating report suggested that for your Quality Improvement Plan you might like to consider ways that you can use critical reflection to extend on your Meeting NQS result for Quality Area 3.

How might you go about this?



## True or False?

Being able to demonstrate how you've unsuccessfully tried to meaningfully engage with families and/or the community is enough to meet the Exceeding theme?

**False.** To receive an Exceeding NQS rating for any of the standards of the NQS you need to be able to demonstrate how **practice is shaped by** meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.



## True or False?

A rating of Exceeding National Quality Standard means going 'above and beyond' what is expected at the Meeting NQS level for a standard but there is nothing to tell you what they might look like.

**False.** The Guide to the NQS includes guidance to assist services and assessors to consider if practice demonstrates the Exceeding NQS themes at the level required for a rating of Exceeding NQS.







## True or False?

The Quality Improvement Plan isn't about planning improvements in practice to achieve an Exceeding NQS rating.

**False.** The Quality Improvement Plan can be used to identify goals and outcomes to support improvement planning to achieve Exceeding NQS level practice.



## True or False?

During an assessment and rating visit, an assessor will just rely on you to tell them about your Exceeding NQS practice and how you meet the three Exceeding NQS themes for each standard.

**False.** Assessors will observe practice, sight documentation and discuss practice throughout the assessment visit to gather evidence against the NQS, including for determining practice against the three Exceeding NQS themes.



## True or False?

If you have received a rating of Meeting NQS the assessment and rating report will also indicate if one or two of the Exceeding NQS themes have also been met.

**True.** If any, but not all, of the Exceeding NQS themes have been met it will be indicated in the report. If all three Exceeding NQS themes have been met the rating for that standard would have been Exceeding NQS.



## Scenario

You just started a new role as the educational leader and the service has been rated Exceeding NQS in all areas except Quality Area 1.

As the educational leader you've been asked to take the lead in planning for bringing Quality Area 1 up to an Exceeding NQS level.

How would you plan for this?



## True or False?

Exceeding NQS theme 3: Practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community, does not apply to the standards from Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements.

**False.** The Exceeding NQS themes apply to all 15 standards, and all seven Quality Areas, of the NQS.



## Activity

Exceeding NQS theme three considers how practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.

Make a list of who is, or should be, considered part of your community.



## Activity

Following an assessment and rating visit, the rating report highlighted that it was hard for the assessor to identify where critical reflection has informed practice for the two Quality Area 3 standards.

What could you include as a goal/s in the service Quality Improvement Plan to address this issue and what are some strategies you might use to achieve this?



## True or False?

You can still have one NQS element as not met and still get rated Exceeding NQS for the standard.

**False.** All elements for a standard must be met before consideration can be given if the standard is to be rated Meeting NQS or if all three Exceeding NQS themes are met, Exceeding NQS.





## True or False?

Quality Area 1 can be rated at Exceeding NQS if one standard is rated at Meeting NQS and two standards are rated at Exceeding NQS.

**False.** For Quality Area 1 all three standards must be rated Exceeding NQS to be rated Exceeding NQS.



## True or False?

For there to be meaningful engagement with families and/or the community all families and/or the community need to be involved in all decisions in the service.

**False.** This theme recognises that high quality practice is **informed by** and tailored to the unique strengths and needs of children, families and the community. An understanding of the uniqueness of children, families and the community is increased and supported through meaningful engagement.



## True or False?

You don't need to think about the critical reflection Exceeding NQS theme for Standard 1.3 (assessment and planning), or meaningful engagement as an Exceeding NQS theme for Standard 6.1 (Supportive relationships with families) as they are already part of the standard.

**False.** The Exceeding NQS themes need to be reflected in practices which extend beyond the Meeting NQS standards.



## True or False?

To achieve a rating of Exceeding NQS for any standard, all three Exceeding NQS themes need to be evident for that standard.

**True.** To be rated Exceeding NQS in any standard all three Exceeding NQS themes must be demonstrated for that standard.



## Multiple Choice

When practice is 'embedded' for any standard of the NQS it means that it is:

- a) Usual everyday practice for the specific standard
- b) Consistently and frequently demonstrated across the service
- c) Understood by all
- d) Evident in many ways, both visibly and invisibly across all of the service's practices, systems and operations.
- e) **All of the above**



## True or False?

Services need to demonstrate Exceeding NQS practice in the same way as the Exceeding NQS indicators in the Guide to the National Quality Framework?

**False.** The guidance is provided to assist services and assessors to consider if practice for the standard demonstrates the Exceeding NQS themes. The indicators provided are not exhaustive, and services may demonstrate Exceeding NQS practice in a variety of ways that suit their particular operating environment and approach to practice.



## True or False?

You need to critically reflect on the influences on your practices.

**True.** When practice is informed by critical reflection, educators consider, question, analyse and re-evaluate practice. This supports a culture of ongoing self-assessment that helps identify continuous improvement and improved outcomes for children, families and educators.



## True or False?

A service Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) isn't about Exceeding NQS themes or ratings.

**False.** The QIP is an opportunity to share Exceeding NQS practice identified in your service self-assessment against the NQS as well as set goals and plan for those areas where improvements are required to meet the Exceeding NQS benchmark.





## Multiple Choice

Evidence demonstrating how a service meets the NQS will be collected by an assessor during an assessment and rating visit. Which of the following methods is used to collect evidence against the three Exceeding NQS themes?

- a) Observe practice
- b) Discuss practice
- c) Sight documentation
- d) **All of the above**



## Discussion Point

The Guide to the National Quality Framework tells us that guidance for the Exceeding NQS rating is provided to assist services and assessors to consider if practice is at the level required for a rating of Exceeding NQS. The indicators provided are not exhaustive, and services may demonstrate Exceeding NQS practice in a variety of ways.

Why is it important that the indicators are not exhaustive or prescriptive?



## Discussion Point

Thinking creatively, what are some of the ways you could have meaningful engagement with families in the two standards from Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements?



## Discussion Point

What do you see as the differences between activity evaluation and critical reflection?



## Scenario

A new family at your service has enrolled their six week old baby. They have asked that, just like at home, their baby sleep with a comfort toy and on their tummy. This practice is against Safe Sleeping guidelines, and your service policy.

How might you approach this?

How might the way you approach this reflect the three Exceeding NQS themes?



## Multiple Choice

If practice is embedded in service operations for Quality Area 4:

- a) **Each educator is aware of and implements the practice consistently**
- b) Most educators implement the practice
- c) One FDC educator doesn't have to do the practice because they don't yet know about it
- d) There is one standard rated Exceeding NQS so it carries over to both standards in the Quality Area



## Multiple Choice

Which of the following indicators for Exceeding NQS theme 3 could assist services and authorised officers identify practice that is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or community?

- a) Families have access to a suggestion box
- b) Educators talk to families when they arrive at the service for drop off.
- c) **The voices of families are valued and taken into consideration**
- d) Information about families is collected at enrolment



## Multiple Choice

When practice is embedded in service operations this means:

- a) **It is usual practice**
- b) It has to happen at least once a month
- c) It is just evident at the time of the assessment and ratings visit
- d) It is only the responsibility of permanent educators





## Multiple Choice

Services that demonstrate that they are Exceeding NQS:

- a) **Do so in ways that are relevant to the children, families and context of the service**
- b) Have a significant number of expensive resources across the service
- c) Are able to embed everything quickly
- d) Have been operating for a long time



## Discussion Point

What does it mean when practice is embedded?

What are some of the indicators in your service of embedded practice?



## Discussion Point

What are some of the responses you would expect an educator at your service to give if an assessor asked about how Exceeding NQS theme 1, practice is embedded in service operations, is demonstrated for the Standard 5.2: Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships?



## Discussion Point

What aspects of your service's philosophy, policies and procedures support program and practices that exceed the NQS?



## Discussion Point

How does critical reflection support the team to make well informed decisions and plans?



## Discussion Point

How do you know that practice in your service reflects your local context and/or location?



## Discussion Point

What are some of the responses you would expect an educator at your service to give if an assessor asked about how Exceeding NQS theme 2, practice is informed by critical reflection, is demonstrated for the Standard 3.2: The service environment is inclusive, promotes competence and supports exploration and play-based learning?



## Discussion Point

What are some of the responses you would expect an educator at your service to give if an assessor asked about how Exceeding NQS theme 3, practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community, is demonstrated for the Standard 1.1: The educational program enhances each child's learning and development?







## Discussion Point

Exceeding NQS theme 3 states that practice is shaped by meaningful engagement with families and/or the community.

What do you think makes engagement with families and/or community meaningful?



## Discussion Point

Discuss opportunities educators currently have to engage in a lively culture of professional inquiry to support continuous improvement to achieve practice at the Exceeding NQS level.



## Discussion Point

The educational leader has an important role to support educators to reflect on programs and practices.

Discuss strategies educational leaders could implement to support practice that exceeds the NQS.



## Discussion Point

How does your service meaningfully represent your local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander perspective/context in your program?

How do you forge strong collaborative partnerships with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities?

What can your service contribute to those communities?



## Discussion Point

To achieve the Exceeding NQS theme 1 educators, the educational leader, and the co-ordinator demonstrate a deep understanding of the requirements of the standard, concept and the component elements, and a commitment to high quality practice.

How does, or can, your induction process highlight to educators the expectations around demonstrating a commitment to high quality practice?



## Discussion Point

What does it mean to engage meaningfully with:

- Families?
- Children?

What might this look like in practice?



## Discussion Point

How does critical reflection occur:

- Across your service team?
- Individually?

How are children involved in the reflection on the program, their learning spaces, and how their voices are being heard and incorporated?



## Discussion Point

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

Who at your service could discuss how practice for this standard is informed by critical reflection? What are some examples of practice they might provide?





## Discussion Point

What is the difference between demonstrating practice for Element 1.3.2 (critical reflection) and Exceeding NQS theme 2: practice is informed by critical reflection?

How does the guidance for Element 1.3.2 differ from that for Exceeding NQS for Standard 1.3 in the Guide to the National Quality Framework?



## Discussion Point

Exceeding NQS theme 1 asks that at a standard level educators, the educational leader, and the co-ordinator demonstrate a deep understanding of the requirements of the standard, concept and the component elements, and a commitment to high quality practice at all times.

How can casual or temporary educators be supported to develop this understanding?



## Discussion Point

The National Quality Standard and Assessment and Rating chapter of the Guide to the National Quality Framework provides Exceeding NQS indicators for each of the Exceeding NQS themes for every standard of the NQS.

How could you use these indicators to plan for quality improvement in your services?



## Discussion Point

Are there educators in your team who could step up to be the Exceeding NQS champions in your service?

What attributes would contribute to success as an Exceeding NQS champion?



## Discussion Point

How is the value and influence of Exceeding NQS practice communicated to families in your service?



## Discussion Point

What are some of the challenges your service faces when attempting to meaningfully engage families and/or the community?

What are some solutions to those challenges?



## Discussion Point

What strategies does your service implement to ensure meaningful engagement with families and/or the community is reciprocally beneficial?



## Discussion Point

Choose one of the 15 standards of the NQS, then as a group, document how you ensure the service's approach to quality practice for this standard is demonstrated against the three Exceeding NQS themes.

Identify opportunities to include some new goals in your quality improvement plan.