



NATIONAL QUALITY
FRAMEWORK

EXCELLENT RATING RE-APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Continuing your commitment
to exceptional practice



These guidelines have been developed to assist services seeking to reapply for the Excellent rating and should be used alongside the Excellent rating Application Guidelines.

WHY REAPPLY FOR THE EXCELLENT RATING?

The Excellent rating is the highest rating under the National Quality Framework, and recognises services that provide education and care at the highest level.

Achieving the Excellent rating more than once provides national recognition of your position as a sector leader in the continued delivery of exceptional education and care.

Services successful in their re-application are celebrated for their ability to effectively reflect, adapt and grow, as well as supporting others to do the same.

This will all be evident in your achievements over the five year period of your Excellent rating, and in planning ahead for the next five years.

IS OUR SERVICE ELIGIBLE TO REAPPLY?

Services rated Exceeding NQS in all seven quality areas may reapply within the 90 day period prior to their current Excellent rating expiring. To hold the Excellent rating continuously, you should reapply as soon as you are eligible. We will then be able to assess your re-application for the Excellent rating and make a decision before your current Excellent rating expires. If you

submit a re-application and your Excellent rating expires during the 60 day assessment period, your service's overall rating will revert back to Exceeding NQS.

As outlined in the National Law, an application received after your Excellent rating has expired is not considered a re-application.

If you submit an application after your Excellent rating has expired, you will need to tick 'previously applied' on your new application form.

WHAT HAPPENS IF OUR SERVICE DOESN'T REAPPLY?

Under the National Law, the Excellent rating is awarded for five years. (Please check the legislation for the duration period for the Excellent rating in Western Australia.) If you choose not to reapply while holding the Excellent rating, your overall rating will revert to Exceeding NQS when your Excellent rating expires.

WILL OUR SERVICE BE RE-ASSESSED BY THE REGULATORY AUTHORITY?

We will notify your state or territory regulatory authority nine months prior to your Excellent rating expiring. Regulatory authorities determine when services are assessed and rated against the NQS and may decide to reassess your service when notified, or at another time. To keep your Excellent rating, you must continue to be rated Exceeding NQS in all seven quality areas by the regulatory authority.

Many services ask if they need to have been re-assessed and rated since their last Excellent rated application. Currently, there is no provision within the National Law that requires this to happen. Choosing to reapply for the Excellent rating before or after your assessment and rating process is a decision your service needs to make. Eligibility to reapply is based on the rating of the service at the time of the reapplication.

WRITING YOUR RE-APPLICATION

Resources to use

Before you start your re-application we recommended revisiting:

[Excellent rating Application Guidelines](#)

[Writing an evidence statement for the Excellent rating information sheet](#)

[Applying for the Excellent rating: Participants Handbook](#)

When to start the re-application process?

We recommend that you begin the re-application process at least four to six months before your current expiry date.

This allows your staff, children, families and community member's adequate time to:

- engage in discussions about the re-application process
- begin collecting and reviewing the evidence for your reapplication
- consider and identify which themes and criterion your evidence reflects
- develop and write a statement based on the evidence for each criterion and theme
- revisit your last application and reflect on achievement and growth from then to now
- review and revise your re-application before submission to ACECQA.

Previous application versus re-application

ACECQA's review of re-applications indicates that most services reapply using themes from their previous Excellent rating application/re-application. You **are not** required to reapply under the same themes from your last application/re-application. You may apply for any previous themes not met in your first application or re-application.

We suggest revisiting your last application and reflecting on your previous practices and accomplishments. Compare and contrast these with your current practices to identify:

- what **new** practices have been implemented? How are they innovative?
- what practices have continued, **evolved** and been improved upon? What specific changes have been made to practice and why?
- are your continued or improved practices still **innovative**? How do your practice changes show innovation?
- how has your **service context** (child, family, staff and local community needs and circumstances) changed over the past five years? How do your current practices, programs and partnerships respond to and show those needs have been addressed?



- who has **responsibility** and ownership in implementing and evaluating service practices?
- what specific outcomes you have **achieved** for your children and families since being awarded the Excellent rating?
- your previous and current evidence of leadership and development **external** to your service. How have you **enhanced** your leadership practices to inspire and
- develop a community, local area or the sector in new, refined and innovative ways?
- the **progress** made with your previous practices and improvement plans (as outlined under **criterion 3** of your first application/re-application). How do your current practices and current planning documents demonstrate how new opportunities have and will be actioned?

Remember, your re-application needs to demonstrate how your service has evaluated practices, programs and partnerships to determine their effectiveness in meeting current child and family needs and circumstances.

Tell us how your reflections and evaluations identified the need for changes to practice. What were the changes and how have those changes made your practices more effective in meeting the needs of your current children and families at the highest level? You may find it beneficial to discuss your practices or have your re-application reviewed by another service, service leader, mentor or critical friend to help determine whether your modified and new practices are unique, innovative or inspiring.

Examples of practice

You may provide examples of practice used in your last application/re-application if they reflect **current** practice and **relevance** at your service. However, ensure you have sufficiently demonstrated **how** these practices have evolved over time. Be **explicit** about why, how and what changes, or extensions have occurred to these practices, programs, partnerships or projects. Remember, you need to demonstrate how outcomes have been improved for the children and families **currently** and/or **recently** attending your service, and how you have determined this. For criterion 3 you are required to demonstrate:

- how you met the continuous improvement commitments made in your last application
- how you will continue to maintain your commitment to continuous improvement and sustained exceptional practice over the upcoming five year period.

Writing your evidence statements

To support your service in writing an evidence statement for an Excellent rating re-application, please review the information sheet on “[Writing an evidence statement for the Excellent rating.](#)”

This information includes the exceptional practice framework, a series of reflective questions your service may ask when writing your statements for new and evolved practices, programs and partnerships and case study examples.

What to include

(as required under section 159 of the National Law)

- you need to submit a new Excellent rating application form
- your re-application must provide a statement with evidence explaining how your service currently meets each of the three Excellent rating criteria and selected themes.

THE EXCELLENT RATING RE-APPLICATION PROCESS

How will ACECQA assess my re-application?

ACECQA must assess your re-application against the Excellent rating criteria and may only re-award the Excellent rating if your service currently meets the Excellent criteria.

Your re-application should demonstrate how your service has continued to improve and evolve over the previous five years. ACECQA will determine if the criteria are met based on the evidence and information you submit as part of your re-application, and through engaging with you through the assessment process. Applicants should address the criteria in full and provide an explanation and examples of practice that supports each claim against the Excellent rating criteria.

ACECQA will compare your last Excellent rating application to your re-application. Please ensure your re-application and statements with evidence is not just a copy or rewording of your first application.

How long does ACECQA take to assess a re-application?

Under the National Law, the timeframes for a re-application are the same as for an application. ACECQA must assess the re-application and make a decision within 60 days of receiving it. ACECQA must then notify the approved provider and regulatory authority of the decision within 14 days of making the decision.

Can we speak to someone before reapplying?

Yes, if you have any questions about your re-application, please contact ACECQA on 1300 422 327 or email excellent@acecqa.gov.au. We are happy to discuss the re-application process with you.