

A&R Toolkit

The purpose of Centre Support's A&R Toolkit weekly professional development is to:

- show educators what they must **know, practice and understand** about each NQS element
- help educators discover what **they're good at**
- find areas **to improve**
- **help educators write** part of the **centre's QIP/SAT**.

We cover one NQS element every week.

The following pages contain a sample week of Centre Support's A&R Toolkit. There are nine sections:

Section 1 Meeting (Educators) - Learn what is required for the meeting.

Section 2 Evaluation and Reflection (Room Leaders and Educators) - Conducted by the room leader along with their educators.

Section 3 Document Meeting Practice (Room Leaders and Educators) - Responsibility of room leaders to work with their educators to document their meeting practices.

Section 4 Policy Review (All Employees) - Participation required from all staff members.

Section 5 Exceeding Standards: Embedded Practice (Nominated Supervisor) - Specifically for the Nominated Supervisor's attention to ensure they document the services exceeding practice or identify how to become exceeding.

Section 6 Exceeding Standards: Critical Reflection (Educational Leader) - Educational Leader to manage whole service critical reflection.

Section 7 Exceeding Standards: Family and Community Links (Second in Charge) - Task for the Second in Charge to manage with the service educators.

Section 8 Role of the Educational Leader (Educational Leader) - Detailed guidelines for the Educational Leader.

Section 9 Management vs Leadership (Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader, Room Leaders) - Targeted at Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader, and Room Leaders to improve their management and leadership skills.

The biggest benefit of Centre Support's A&R Toolkit is that it keeps all educators on track for a successful Assessment & Rating.

Self-Assessment - what you are currently doing for the NQS Element?

The first part of self-assessment for the NQS is to discover where your practices and knowledge are currently.

Once your educators know where they are in relationship to the NQS element, then they can plan to improve.



Get your whole team on the same page with Centre Support!

7.1.1

Service philosophy and purpose

A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.

Week 1
29.1.2024

Section 1. Meeting (Educators) - Learn what is required for meeting



First step: We must ensure the Law and Regulations are always met. **Second step:** then we look at the NQS and work through the process of meeting the element.



Law & Regs

There are no Regulations related to Element 7.1.1 Service philosophy and practice. However, the Guide to the NQF says (p. 286) that the Philosophy reflects the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework which can be found in the **National Law Section 3 Objectives and guiding principles**.

The guiding principles of the national education and care services quality framework are as follows—

- that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount;
- that children are successful, competent and capable learners;
- that the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie this Law;
- that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued;
- that the role of parents and families is respected and supported;
- that best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services.

Describe how you are meeting one of the points from above.

The following section will show you exactly what to do to ensure your practice is meeting.

Why is the element important?

Element 7.1.1 **Service philosophy and purpose** – A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.:

- underpins the decisions, policies, and daily practices of the service
- reflects a shared understanding of the role of the service among staff, children, families, and the community
- guides educators' pedagogy, planning and practice when delivering the educational program.

What could potentially go wrong if educators didn't do the above?

Disruption in Learning Due to Inconsistent Practices:

Without a guiding philosophy, educators might adopt varied teaching methods and interaction styles with children, leading to inconsistency. This inconsistency can create confusion and disrupt the learning environment. For instance, children might struggle to adapt to differing disciplinary approaches or teaching styles, impacting their ability to establish routines and feel secure.

Deviation from Service Goals Due to Misaligned Practices:

If educators are not aligned with the service philosophy, they might inadvertently focus on personal goals that do not match the service's overall objectives. This misalignment can lead to a disjointed approach to early learning, hindering the achievement of key outcomes. For example, if the service philosophy emphasises inclusivity but an educator prioritises competitive activities, it could undermine the inclusive environment the service strives to create.

3. Compromised Teamwork and Collaboration:

A shared understanding of the service philosophy fosters teamwork among educators. Lack of engagement with

the philosophy can lead to reduced collaboration and poor communication. This might manifest in disjointed lesson planning or inconsistent responses to children's needs, impacting the effectiveness of the service and the quality of care and education provided.

Reduced Focus on Child-Centred Learning: A core element of many service philosophies is child-centred learning. Without using the philosophy as a guide, educators might lean towards a more rigid, standardised approach. This can restrict opportunities for tailored learning experiences that respond to individual children's interests and needs. For example, an educator might persist with a pre-planned activity despite children showing more interest in a different subject, thereby limiting engagement and exploration.

Difficulties in Engaging Families: If educators do not reflect and communicate the service's philosophy, establishing meaningful relationships with families can be challenging. Families might feel less connected to the service and less involved in their child's education, leading to missed opportunities for collaborative support. For example, if family participation is a key component of the philosophy, but educators do not actively involve families, this could create a disconnect.

Loss of Unique Service Identity: The service philosophy often defines the unique identity and purpose of a centre. Ignoring this philosophy can lead to a loss of distinct character, making it difficult to stand out among other early childhood services. For instance, if a service is known for its nature-based learning philosophy but fails to implement it, it could lose its unique appeal to families seeking that specific educational approach.



You must practice

examples.

It's very important to make sure your philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations. To do this look at the below practice

Establishing Consistent Practices: Educators can achieve consistency in their teaching and interactions with children by actively participating in professional development and team meetings focused on the service philosophy. Regular discussions on how to practically apply the philosophy can deepen educators' understanding of its key principles and their integration into daily routines with children. Establishing clear expectations and guidelines rooted in the philosophy can foster a harmonious and secure learning environment, supporting children in establishing routines and feeling safe.

Aligning with Service Goals: Educators can foster a shared understanding of the service philosophy by talking with colleagues. Engaging in conversations about the philosophy's relevance and impact can help align individual efforts with the service's overarching vision. Collaborative planning sessions, where educators collectively design activities that reflect the philosophy, can enhance alignment with service goals and desired outcomes for children.

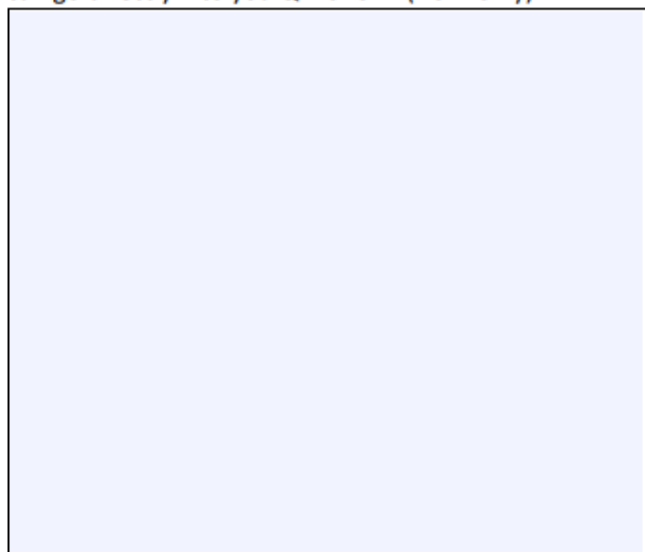
Promoting Collaboration and Teamwork: Educators can nurture a collaborative culture through regular reflective practices, such as peer observations, joint planning sessions, and sharing constructive feedback. Recognising and utilising each other's strengths and expertise in applying the service philosophy can strengthen teamwork. Professional development and team-building activities that highlight the importance of collaboration can further bolster a united approach among staff.

Focusing on Child-Centred Learning: Educators should actively observe and engage with children, using the philosophy as a framework to tailor learning experiences to individual interests, strengths, and needs. Flexible curriculum planning and providing opportunities for child-led learning can ensure active engagement and development, keeping children at the heart of educational experiences.

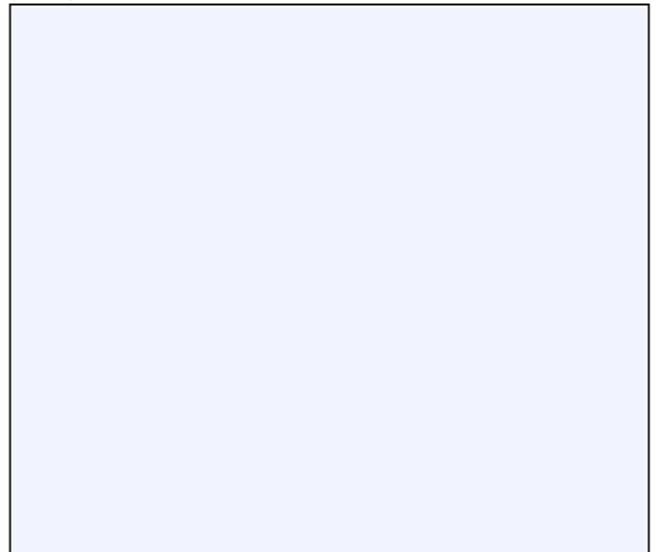
Enhancing Family Engagement: Educators can live out the service philosophy by involving families in their children's educational journey. Regular interactions through parent-teacher meetings, newsletters, and family events can help families grasp the philosophy and its influence on their child's experiences at the centre. Inviting families to contribute their insights and ideas can forge meaningful partnerships that enrich the children's learning environment.

Reinforcing Service Identity: Educators can actively contribute to defining the service's identity by upholding the core values of the philosophy. Showcasing the service's uniqueness through cultural events, traditions, and engagement with the local community can highlight its distinct character. Consistently aligning practices with the philosophy and communicating its significance to families and the community can affirm the service's reputation for quality early childhood education.

After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you are doing well? Describe your practice in detail so it can go directly into you QIP or SAT (NSW only).



After reading these points, which one(s) do you think you need to work on? Describe how you could improve your practice.



The following page shows how Centre Support's A&R Toolkit helps educators meet each NQS Element using a detailed checklist

We believe checklists can provide valuable information so we don't just look for 'yes or no' answers from educators. We want to know whether a practice is embedded, whether educators know they should be doing something but aren't, and when educators don't know how to do something.

Educators' answers can be used by the Educational Leader or Nominated Supervisor to coach and train educators, once again contributing to continual improvement in practice.

Centre Support's A&R Toolkit provides the structure and embedded evidence you can use to prove you are an exceeding service.



7.1.1

Service philosophy and purpose

A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.

Week 1
29.1.2024

Section 2. Evaluation and Reflection (Room Leaders and Educators)
Conducted by the room leader along with their educators.



Checklist

Why are you doing the checklist?

The practices identified in the checklist are what the assessor needs to see you do so they can check you're 'meeting the NQS.' If there's something on the checklist that you're not doing, you need to adjust your practice to do it, or ask for help and training to implement it ie work with your educational/room leader who should teach/coach you how to do it. This process uses the **summative assessment process** from the **new EYLF and MTOP**. Educators review your achievements and capabilities at specified or selected timepoints. Please make a judgement about the path you are on to understanding the element.

The checklist keys to use.

- E = Embedded** I do that **ALL** the time
- K = I know** I need to do that, but I don't do it all the time
- T = Please teach** me how to do it or improve my understanding of why I need to do it.

Name Educator 1	
Name Educator 2	
Name Educator 3	
Name Educator 4	
Name Educator 5	

ED1 ED2 ED3 ED4 ED5

	ED1	ED2	ED3	ED4	ED5
Do you know where to find the service philosophy?					
Can you discuss what is in the service philosophy eg with families or an authorised officer?					
Does the philosophy include the values and practices that are important for your service eg equity and inclusion?					
Can you explain how the philosophy					
• guides your curriculum planning and evaluation.					
• guides the decisions you make every day at the service.					
• guides your relationships with children and families.					
• supports the principles and practices of the EYLF and MTOP?					
• supports the NQS and our goal of continuous improvement?					
• aligns with the service current priorities and					
Do you participate in reviews of the philosophy?					

A template for critical reflection

Critical reflection is beneficial because it often leads to improvements in practice if done properly.

We provide an example based on the week's NQS element which shows educators how they must reflect critically by examining events and experiences through the eyes of children, educators/Nominated Supervisor, families/community, and theorists. We also provide a blank template for educators to reflect critically.

In our QIP/SAT example on the following pages we show how we've used the example to complete the improvement plan in the QIP template. You can use what educators have written to do the same thing.

Note - To achieve exceeding for theme two ALL educators must consistently demonstrate how they critically reflect and show how they're meet the Critical Reflection indicators.

The following pages show how Centre Support's A&R Toolkit helps your educators write your QIP saving you many, many hours of work

"I am fairly new to Centre Support, and can I just say, I cannot be more pleased! These weekly emails sincerely assist me in being a great leader– not just an admin – and embedding meaningful feedback and reflections into our service to increase high quality education and care. No grey areas, and amazing for time management!

Thank you!"

Mel Fletcher – Community Junction Inc

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Section 3. Document Meeting Practice (Room Leaders and Educators)

Room leaders work with educators to document their meeting practices.



Examples to reference, if needed for your QIP and SAT (NSW only)

Meeting – 1. Decision-Making and Daily Practices

Informed by the Service Philosophy: Our service's decision-making process and daily practices are deeply embedded in our Service Philosophy. For instance, our philosophy emphasises holistic child development, influencing our choices in curriculum design and educational material selection. This approach is visible in our daily routines, where activities are selected not only for their educational value but also for their ability to support physical, emotional, and social development. This holistic approach ensures that the children's learning experiences are comprehensive, catering to all facets of their growth.

2. Shared Understanding Among Stakeholders Aligned with the Service Philosophy

The shared understanding of our service's role, as outlined in our Service Philosophy, is evident in the collaborative relationships among staff, children, families, and the community. For example, our philosophy stresses the importance of community engagement. This is reflected in how we organise events that involve families and local community members, such as cultural festivals and environmental projects. These events not only enhance the children's learning experiences but also strengthen the connections between the service, families, and the broader community, creating a supportive and interconnected environment for the children.

3. Educator's Pedagogy Mirroring the Service Philosophy

The educators' pedagogical (teaching, learning and assessing) approaches directly mirror our Service Philosophy. A key element of our philosophy is the focus on child-led learning. Educators implement this by creating flexible lesson plans that allow for spontaneous learning opportunities based on children's interests and questions. This approach empowers children to take an active role in their learning journey, fostering curiosity and a love for learning. Educators regularly adapt their teaching methods and materials to cater to the diverse needs and interests of the children, ensuring that the educational programme is both engaging and effective.

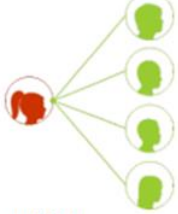
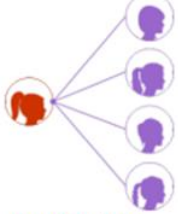
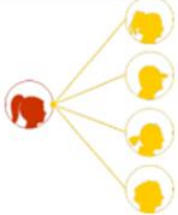
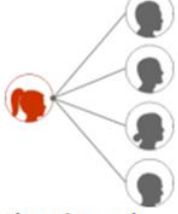
If you are doing similar practices to the example, use the below questions to help you write your 'meeting' description so you can add it to your QIP.

A MEETING QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)
<i>Please explain how educators are guided by the Service Philosophy.</i>
<i>Please give an example of how your Service policies/procedures reflect the values/statements in the Philosophy.</i>
<i>Please give an example of how your relationships and interactions with children support the values/statements in the Philosophy.</i>



The EYLF and MTOP says. "Evaluation practices involve educators' critical reflection on the effectiveness of their planning and implementation of curriculum for children's learning as part of the planning cycle, both for and with children'. Pick one of the following reflection points to complete the table below:

- How could you contribute to a more meaningful review of the Service Philosophy? Used below.
- In what situations would it be appropriate and relevant to refer to the Service Philosophy with families?
- **What needs to happen to ensure educators and staff view the Service Philosophy as an important Guide to Service practices?** See below for the example.

Critically reflect through the eyes of:	Write your critical reflection below	What changes did you or will you make because of the reflection?
 <p>a child</p>	<p>Children see and experience the world in a unique and unfiltered way. From their perspective, the Service Philosophy should be something that makes them feel safe, valued, and excited to learn. It should guide the creation of an environment where they can explore, make friends, and grow. Reflecting on this, it's crucial that the philosophy should resonate with warmth, inclusiveness, and a focus on the interests and needs of each child.</p>	<p>Enhancing Communication: Regularly discussing the philosophy with all stakeholders (educators, families, and children) to ensure it remains relevant and understood by all.</p>
 <p>an educator</p>	<p>For educators, the Service Philosophy should act as a compass, directing their teaching methods, interactions, and decision-making processes. It should inspire and inform their practices, ensuring they are inclusive, reflective, and focused on the holistic development of each child. This perspective calls for a philosophy that is both practical and aspirational, providing clear guidance while leaving room for creativity and personal teaching styles.</p>	<p>Professional Development: Providing ongoing training for educators to align their practices with the evolving philosophy.</p>
 <p>your families</p>	<p>Families entrust their children to the service, expecting that their values and expectations for their child's care and education will be respected and mirrored. The Service Philosophy should align with these expectations, fostering a sense of trust and partnership. Families should see it as a reflection of their own beliefs about what is best for their child's development and learning.</p>	<p>Feedback Mechanisms: Establishing systems for regular feedback from families and educators, ensuring the philosophy remains responsive to the needs of the community it serves.</p>
 <p>theorist and current research</p>	<p>Looking at the Service Philosophy from an academic and research standpoint, it should embody contemporary best practices in early childhood education. It should reflect an understanding of child development theories and align with the latest research on effective learning strategies. This means a philosophy that evolves and adapts as new insights and understandings emerge in the field.</p>	<p>Child-Centred Updates: Regularly reviewing the philosophy to ensure it reflects current research and theories, with a specific focus on what is best for children's learning and development.</p> <p>Visibility and Accessibility: Making the philosophy more visible and accessible within the service environment and in communications with families.</p>

The following pages show how Centre Support's A&R Toolkit assists you to achieve exceeding.

In sections 5, 6 and 7 the Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Second in Charge assess the service under each of the **three exceeding themes**.

The Nominated Supervisor assesses the **Exceeding Standard: Embedded practice**. This is designed specifically for the Nominated Supervisors attention to ensure they document the services exceeding practices of identify how to become exceeding.

The Educational Leader manages the **Exceeding Standard: Critical Reflection**, by way of whole service participation.

The Second in Charge manages the **Exceeding Standard: Family and Community Links** with the service educators.

Centre Support's A&R Toolkit removes the stress from the NQS.



"Thanks for all your help, support, advice, patience and understanding throughout the years. I cannot talk more highly about Centre Support, and I congratulate Matthew on what he has achieved, his dedication and commitment to the child care profession. The name 'Centre Support' speaks for itself!!! It's the best support I have ever received in all my time in the child care profession."

Angela Salakas – Leylands Learning Centre

7.1.1

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A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.

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Section 5. Exceeding Standards: Embedded Practice (Nominated Supervisor)

Identify exceeding practice or implement how to become exceeding.



Assess your practice first.

Read the below description and evaluate it in relation to your practices.

Exceeding – Embedded Practice

We actively participate in the regular review of our Philosophy, which includes annual reviews, assessing incidents and complaints, and examining other matters. Following comprehensive research into the dynamics of babies in groups, we've recently updated our Philosophy. These updates include incorporating a shared-agency approach and Group Theory. We've also recognised the importance of a work group mentality, leading us to reorganise the order of our core values to better reflect these insights.

If you are doing similar practices to the example, use the below question to help you write your '**exceeding practice for embedded**' description so you can add it to your QIP or SAT (NSW only).

For **Exceeding** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)

Embedded Practice - Please explain how you **regularly** contribute to **reviews** of the Philosophy and what some of those contributions have been.

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If you and your educators need to learn how to achieve exceeding – embedded practice, proceed here and do below.

The following section outlines the steps to ensure you are exceeding in Embedded Practice. If you have already successfully completed the previous section demonstrating how you are exceeding in Embedded Practice, you do not need to complete this section.

Look at the words in detail to identify what is exceeding.

Please explain how you **regularly** contribute to **reviews** of the Philosophy and what some of those contributions have been.

Section 1 of the question connects to how the individual educator actively participates in the process of reviewing the service's philosophy. It seeks to understand the person's ongoing involvement in providing input, insights, and feedback during the review of the service's guiding principles. This part of the question asks how you regularly take part in discussions and assessments when the service's philosophy is being reviewed. It seeks to know if you actively engage in the process of sharing your thoughts, ideas, and feedback on the guiding principles that shape the service's operations.

Section 2 of the question, **examples of contributions to philosophy reviews**. In this section, the question requests specific examples of how the individual educator has contributed to reviews of the service's philosophy. It aims to identify concrete instances where the person has offered valuable inputs or made a difference during the process of reviewing and refining the service's core principles. This part of the question asks you to provide some real-life examples of how you have actively participated in the reviews of the service's philosophy. It wants to hear about instances where you have shared your ideas, opinions, or suggestions, and how your contributions have influenced the direction or improvement of the service's guiding principles.

It is important to ensure that we make it **very clear how these above concepts have created change in your service.**

Please explain how you **regularly** contribute to **reviews** of the Philosophy and what some of those contributions have been.

Engagement in Staff Meetings: In staff meetings, educators are encouraged to actively engage in discussions about the service's philosophy. They can express their views on its daily implementation and propose enhancements. For instance, an educator might advocate for integrating more bushy experiences, reinforcing the centre's commitment to fostering children's connection with the Australian bush.

Providing Observations and Insights: Educators contribute by sharing their observations from their interactions with children, families, and colleagues. They can pinpoint specific examples where the philosophy's positive influence is evident or suggest areas for improvement. For example, an educator might discuss how a play-based learning approach has boosted the children's creativity and self-expression.

Participation in Documentation Process: Educators can play a vital role in documenting the review process, such as writing reflective notes, capturing photographs, or creating displays that demonstrate the philosophy in action. This could include, for example, a display of children's artwork inspired by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, aligning with the centre's focus on cultural awareness.

Involving Families in Reviews: Gathering feedback from families is crucial. This can be achieved through surveys or discussions, gathering insights on the philosophy's impact. An example would be seeking parents' feedback on the centre's approach to inclusive practices, ensuring every child's needs are met and valued.

Ongoing Professional Development: Educators can enhance their contribution by participating in professional development focused on philosophical and pedagogical aspects. Attending seminars on

approaches like the Montessori method can offer new insights to enrich the philosophy. For instance, after a workshop on Montessori, educators might discuss incorporating more self-directed learning activities.

Reflective Practice: Regular self-reflection is key for educators. Assessing their teaching methods and how these align with the centre's philosophy is crucial. Through self-evaluation, educators can identify areas for further alignment with the centre's principles, like incorporating more opportunities for children to lead their own learning.

Your turn. Select a point from above and break it down into the subsections.

Please explain how you **regularly** contribute to **reviews** of the Philosophy...



and what some of those contributions have been...



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Section 6. Exceeding: Critical Reflection (Educational Leader)

Educational Leader to manage whole service critical reflection.



Assess your practice first.

Read the below description and evaluate it in relation to your practices.

Exceeding – Critical reflections. After critical reflection on how our Philosophy aligns with our service's practices, priorities, and purpose, we've made some many changes. We rearranged the core values underpinning our Philosophy, which essentially shape the actions derived from it. This change was important to recognise that the group of educators we have now is different from those who were at the service when the Philosophy was initially written. Our priorities have evolved, due to the influence of our new team members.

If you are doing similar practices to the example, use the below question to help you write your '**exceeding practice for critical reflection**' description so you can add it to your QIP or SAT (NSW only).

For **Exceeding** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)

Critical Reflection - Please explain how and why the Philosophy changed after you or other staff/managers reflected critically on the way it aligned with Service practices, priorities and purpose.

If you and your educators need to learn how to achieve exceeding – critical reflection, proceed here and do below.

The following section outlines the steps to ensure you are exceeding in Critical Reflection. If you have already successfully completed the previous section demonstrating how you are exceeding in Critical Reflection, you do not need to complete this section.

Look at the words in detail to identify what is exceeding.

Please explain how and why the Philosophy changed after you or other staff/managers reflected critically on the way it aligned with Service practices, priorities and purpose.

The first section of the question focuses on the process and specific actions taken to change the service's philosophy. It seeks to understand the steps taken after individuals, including the person being asked and other staff/managers, critically reflected on how the existing philosophy aligned with the service's practices, priorities, and purpose. In this part of the question, you are asked to explain the **actual changes that occurred** in the service's philosophy. It wants to know what **specific adjustments or modifications were made** after careful reflection on how well the existing philosophy aligned with the service's everyday practices, priorities, and overall purpose.

Section 2: Reasons for the Philosophy Change

This section of the question delves into the reasons or motivations behind the decision to change the service's philosophy. It seeks to understand why critical reflection led to the conclusion that changes were necessary to better align the philosophy with the service's practices, priorities, and purpose.

In this part of the question, you are asked to clarify the reasons that **drove the decision to change** the service's philosophy. It wants to know the **underlying factors** or **insights gained** during the critical reflection process that made it evident that adjustments were needed to better fit the service's daily practices, priorities, and overall purpose.

Now that we have examined the words in detail, we can start exploring what these concepts could look like for

you. It is important to ensure that we make it very clear how these concepts have **created change** in your service.

Please explain how and why the Philosophy changed after you or other staff/managers reflected critically on the way it aligned with Service practices, priorities and purpose.

Integrating Respectful and Inclusive Language: During our critical reflection, we realised our Philosophy didn't fully mirror our commitment to respect and inclusivity. We've since updated it to use language that better represents our dedication to creating a welcoming and respectful environment for every child and family.

Prioritising Nature and Outdoor Learning: The reflection process led us to acknowledge that our Philosophy didn't focus enough on the importance of nature and outdoor learning. We've amended it to highlight the significance of outdoor experiences in children's learning and development.

Embracing Cultural Diversity: The review highlighted that our existing Philosophy needed a stronger focus on cultural diversity and awareness. We've adjusted it to underline our commitment to celebrating and integrating diverse cultural perspectives into our daily practices and learning experiences.

Reasons for Changing the Philosophy: The critical reflection process identified gaps and misalignments between our Philosophy and the service's current practices and goals. These insights prompted us to update our Philosophy to better align with our evolving practices and objectives.

Adopting a Holistic Education Approach: Reflection revealed that our Philosophy didn't fully support the holistic educational approach we aim for. Changing the Philosophy was driven by the need to establish a more comprehensive framework that aligns with our vision of providing an all-encompassing, child-centred education.

Incorporating Community Feedback: Feedback from our community made it clear that some

aspects of our Philosophy weren't resonating with them. To boost community engagement and satisfaction, we updated our Philosophy based on this feedback, ensuring it aligns more closely with the community's needs and expectations.

Updating with Current Educational Research: Through critical reflection and reviewing new research in early childhood education, including insights from the latest EYLF/MTOP guidelines, we recognised the need to update our Philosophy. We've revised it to include these new research insights and best practices.

Your example. Select a point from above and break it down into the subsections.

Please explain how and why the Philosophy changed after you or other staff/managers reflected critically...
(Remember reading these descriptions becomes a part of the reflection).

...aligned with Service practices, priorities and purpose.
(Describe the changes you made after the reflection).

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Section 7. Exceeding: Family and Community Links (Second in Charge)

Second in Charge to manage whole service connection to families and community .



Assess your practice first.

Read the below description and evaluate it in relation to your practices.

Exceeding – Family and Community Links. We actively encourage families to give feedback and play a part in reviewing our Philosophy. We've shared examples of the feedback we've received and how it has led to changes in our Philosophy. We use our Philosophy as a tool to guide parents, especially when their values and expectations differ from ours. This assists them in making a more informed decision about whether our centre is the right fit for them. This process begins right from the initial tours of our centre, where we proudly showcase our approach to risky, yet manageable play.

If you are doing similar practices to the example, use the below question to help you write your '**exceeding practice for families and community connection** description so you can add it to your QIP or SAT (NSW only).

For **Exceeding** the QIP and Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)

Families and community links. Please give an example of how you've encouraged families or community members to provide feedback and contribute to reviews of the Philosophy.

If you and your educators need to learn how to achieve exceeding – families and community, proceed here and do below.

The following section outlines the steps to ensure you are exceeding in families and community. If you have already successfully completed the previous section demonstrating how you are exceeding in families and community, you do not need to complete this section.

Look at the words in detail to identify what is exceeding.

Please give an example of how you've encouraged families or community members to provide feedback and contribute to reviews of the Philosophy.

The first section of the question connects to the actions and strategies used by educators to motivate families or community members to provide their feedback and actively contribute to the reviews of the service's philosophy. It seeks to understand how the person has stimulated an environment of open communication and engagement, inviting valuable input from stakeholders. In this part of the question, you are asked to explain how you have motivated and invited families or community members to share their thoughts, opinions, and ideas during the review of the service's philosophy. It wants to know the specific ways you have encouraged open communication and participation from these stakeholders.

In section two of the question, it requests a real-life example or scenario where the educator has successfully encouraged families or community members to provide feedback and actively participate in the reviews of the service's philosophy. It aims to understand the practical application of the strategies mentioned in the previous section. In this part of the question, you are asked to provide a specific example of a situation where you have effectively encouraged families or community members to share their feedback and take an active role in reviewing the service's philosophy. It wants to hear about an actual instance where your efforts resulted in valuable input and meaningful contributions from these stakeholders.

Now that we have examined the words in detail, we can start exploring what these concepts could look like for you. It is important to ensure that we make it very clear how these concepts have **created change** in your service.

Please give an example of how you've encouraged families or community members to provide feedback and contribute to reviews of the Philosophy.

Ongoing Communication: We keep up regular communication with families and the local community through various means like newsletters, emails, and social media updates. I consistently share updates about the review process of our service's philosophy and highlight how crucial their contributions are in shaping our centre's values and practices.

Hosting Family Forums and Interactive Sessions: We arrange family forums and interactive sessions aimed at discussing our service's philosophy and gathering feedback. In these sessions, I lead group discussions and interactive activities to collect a range of views on how the philosophy meets the families' hopes and expectations for their children's education.

Feedback Surveys and Forms: To engage a broader audience and offer a confidential way to give feedback, I create and send out feedback surveys and forms. These are designed to gather thoughts on various aspects of our service's philosophy, asking what families value and what they think could be improved.

Parent-Educator Meetings: During parent-educator meetings, I use the opportunity to talk about our philosophy and its role in children's growth. I encourage parents to share their views and experiences regarding how the philosophy affects their child's learning and development.

Community Participation and Events: I facilitate community participation by organising events like community fairs, local arts and crafts workshops, and visits from local Indigenous elders to share stories and cultural practices. These events are chances for families and community members to engage with our educators and each other, creating a sense of community and inviting feedback.

Digital Feedback Channels: To ease the process for families to give feedback, I've set up a digital platform where they can leave their suggestions and comments. This allows families to contribute their ideas at a time that suits them best.

Your example. Select a point from above and break it down into the subsections.

Please give an example of how you've encouraged families or community members to provide feedback ...



... and contribute to reviews of the Philosophy
*(Remember, you must show how the **families or community** contribution has made a change)*



The following page shows how Centre Support's A&R Toolkit guides your Educational Leader

Every week we provide information, tips and strategies which Educational Leaders can use to support what their educators know, can do and understand in relation to the element covered that week.



Centre Support's A&R Toolkit guides your Educational Leader to upskill, coach and train your educators.

"The support it has provided to our educational leader has made her role easy to grasp and priceless in value to the operations of the service."

Carolyn Shortt – Hopscotch Boambee Preschool

7.1.1

Service philosophy and purpose

A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations.

Week 1
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Detailed guidelines for the Educational Leader.



There are **things** that you need to do with your service and educators.

- (1) Review the points from the Law and Regulation and make yourself familiar with them. Conduct the compliance test with your educators to check their knowledge.
- (2) Add to your folder the daily planner so you can document and show the assessor how you are working with educators. Use documents provided in this section.
- (3) Guide your educators to ensure they are at the meeting level, use the examples in the educators' section and the checklist to help you know exactly what is required.
- (4) Explore the exceeding themes with the examples.
- (5) Work with your Nominated Supervisor, 2IC and edit the QIP (SAT for NSW) template provided by Centre Support to ensure it is reflecting your service's practices.



Law & Regs

There are no Regulations related to Element 7.1.1 Service philosophy and practice. However, the Guide to the NQF says (p. 286) that the Philosophy reflects the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework which can be found in the **National Law Section 3 Objectives and guiding principles**.

The guiding principles of the national education and care services quality framework are as follows—

- (a) that the rights and best interests of the child are paramount;
- (b) that children are successful, competent and capable learners;
- (c) that the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie this Law;
- (d) that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued;
- (e) that the role of parents and families is respected and supported;
- (f) that best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services.

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Question you could ask families regarding the philosophy

1. What is your overall perception of the service's philosophy and how it aligns with your child's education and development?
2. Are there specific aspects of the service's philosophy that resonate strongly with your family's values and priorities? If so, please elaborate.
3. In what ways do you believe the service's philosophy has positively influenced your child's learning experiences and growth?
4. Are there any areas of the service's philosophy that you feel could be further strengthened or expanded upon? If yes, kindly provide your suggestions.
5. How well do you think the service's philosophy reflects the diverse needs and backgrounds of the children and families attending the centre?
6. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "strongly disagree" and 5 being "strongly agree," how much do you feel involved and informed about the service's philosophy and its implementation?
7. Have you noticed any specific practices or actions within the centre that align with the service's philosophy and have had a significant impact on your child's learning and development?
8. Do you have any recommendations for enhancing communication about the service's philosophy and its relevance to your child's experiences at the centre?
9. How comfortable do you feel providing feedback or expressing your thoughts about the service's philosophy openly?
10. Is there any additional information or perspective you would like to share regarding the service's philosophy and its impact on your family's experience at the centre?
11. Have you had any discussions with your child about the service's philosophy or its values? If yes, what were their thoughts or reactions?
12. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the service's philosophy and its alignment with your family's expectations, on a scale of 1 to 5.
13. Are there any particular elements of the service's philosophy that you would like to see emphasised more in your child's daily learning experiences?
14. Have you witnessed any specific instances where the service's philosophy has been reflected in the interactions and activities within the centre?
15. Do you have any suggestions on how the service's philosophy can be further incorporated into community engagement or family involvement initiatives?
16. In your opinion, what role does the service's philosophy play in creating a nurturing and stimulating environment for the children?
17. Please share any personal experiences or anecdotes related to how the service's philosophy has positively impacted your child's attitude towards learning and exploration.
18. How familiar are you with the process of reviewing and revising the service's philosophy? Would you like to be more involved in this process in the future?
19. Are there any specific resources or support that you believe would be beneficial for families to better understand and engage with the service's philosophy?
20. Is there anything else you would like to add or any questions you have regarding the service's philosophy and its continuous improvement?

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Educators' Knowledge and Philosophy Engagement Audit

As an educational leader seeking to comprehensively evaluate and enhance our educators' engagement with and understanding of our service philosophy, consider asking the following reflective questions. These carefully crafted queries aim to stimulate in-depth reflection and discussion among educators, thereby promoting a richer and deeper appreciation of how the service philosophy is understood and implemented in their daily practices.

1. **Understanding the Accessibility of the Service Philosophy:** "Could you share your experience in accessing and referring to our service philosophy? How often do you consult it in your daily practice?"
2. **Discussing the Service Philosophy's Content:** "In what ways do you feel comfortable discussing the key elements of our service philosophy with families or authorised officers? Can you give an example of such a discussion you've had recently?"
3. **Philosophy's Reflection of Values and Practices:** "How do you see our service's values, such as equity and inclusion, represented in our service philosophy? Can you describe how these values manifest in your daily interactions and activities at the service?"
4. **Guidance Provided by the Philosophy in Curriculum Planning and Evaluation:** "Could you walk me through how our service philosophy influences your approach to curriculum planning and evaluation? Perhaps you could share a specific instance where the philosophy guided your decision-making in this area."
5. **Influence of Philosophy on Daily Decisions:** "Can you think of a recent example where our service philosophy directly influenced a decision you made at the service?"
6. **Philosophy's Role in Relationships with Children and Families:** "How does our service philosophy guide your relationships and interactions with children and their families? Can you share a personal experience where this guidance was particularly evident?"
7. **Alignment with EYLF, MTOP, and Continuous Improvement:** "In what ways do you think our service philosophy supports the principles and practices of the EYLF and MTOP? How does it contribute to our goal of continuous improvement under the NQS?"
8. **Service Philosophy and Current Priorities:** "How do you perceive the alignment between our service philosophy and our current service priorities? Are there areas where you see strong alignment or potential for further development?"
9. **Engagement in Philosophy Reviews:** "Can you describe your involvement in the review process of our service philosophy? What insights or suggestions have you contributed in past reviews, or what would you like to contribute in future revisions?"

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Educational Leader weekly sheet

Date	Educational Leader activity	With whom?	Comments	Follow up
Monday 29.1.24	Guiding, supporting, and promoting the philosophy	Educators, children, families	We need to explore how the philosophy relates to job description and interview questions.	Matters related to the service's philosophy are addressed promptly and effectively from our meeting.
Monday 29.1.24				
Tuesday 30.1.24				
Wednesday 31.1.24				
Thursday 1.2.24				
Friday 2.2.24				

General thoughts or ideas