

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates 2011-2012**

Outcome 1 - Early Childhood Education and Child Care

DEEWR Question No. EW0874_12

NQF IMPLEMENTATION

Senator Back asked on 20 October 2011 , Hansard page 114

Senator BACK: In terms of implementation, I think that Minister Ellis recently made the statement that there would be time to implement the changes required under the framework. What is that time frame? Ms Taylor: Senator, the regulations come into force on 1 January. However what comes in at that time is only the first part. There is a staggered period of time for things like ratios—child to teacher, or child to worker. I can take that on notice and go through it for the years between now and 2016 and 2020. If you want a snapshot we can do that, otherwise I am happy to take notice.

Answer

Improved educator to child ratios and educator qualifications are key elements of the National Quality Framework.

- The NQF provides for new ratios and qualification requirements to be phased in from 1 January 2012 through to 1 January 2020. This represents a balance between improved quality and affordability.
- In general, the timeframes for the phased in requirements are as follows:
 - 1 January 2012
 - The National Quality Framework commences and the Education and Care Services National Law and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 come into effect (where jurisdictions have passed the legislation)
 - 1:4 ratio for birth to 24 months in centre-based services
 - 1 January 2014
 - 50% of educators in a centre-based service have (or are actively working towards) a Diploma level education and care qualification or above (the teacher may be included)
 - Other educators in a centre-based service have (or are actively working towards) a Certificate III level education and care qualification (or equivalent)
 - An early childhood teacher is required to be in attendance or be accessible to a centre-based service for some or all of the time that the service is being provided to children (depending on number of children).
 - Family Day Care ratio of 1:7 for each Family Day Care educator with a maximum of four children preschool aged or

under

- All Family Day Care educators to have (or be actively working towards) a minimum Certificate III level education and care qualification
 - All Family Day Care coordinators to have a minimum diploma level education and care qualification
- 1 January 2016
- 1:5 ratio for 25 to 35 months in centre-based services
 - 1:11 ratio for 36 months to preschool age in centre-based services
- 1 January 2020
- A second early childhood teacher must be in attendance for all or some of the time at a centre-based service where the service is being provided to 60 or more children.
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- The National Quality Framework does not yet include a National Standard for children over preschool age regarding ratio and qualification requirements. Individual jurisdictional arrangements will continue apply in the interim.
 - The timeframes listed above are the agreed timeframes from the National Partnership Agreement.
 - In many cases, jurisdictions already meet these requirements or have superior arrangements which will be kept under the National Quality Framework.
 - Jurisdictions have also negotiated a number of transitional arrangements to extend the time before some requirements under the regulations need to be met to ensure a smooth transition. More information on individual State and Territory arrangements can be found in Chapter 7 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.