

Improvements to assessment and rating

Embedding quality improvement as part of your everyday practice

National changes to assessment and rating (A&R) were announced by ACECQA in late 2022 to make A&R more effective and ensure A&R provide families with confidence in the accuracy and currency of quality ratings.

These changes include the increased use of partial reassessments and reduced notice periods from 12 weeks to 5 business days.

The NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority has implemented these changes in a phased approach, starting with the increased use of partial reassessments from late 2023 and 5 day notice periods from early 2024.

These changes will be operationalised for ECEC services across NSW from 1 October 2025.

Driving improvement across the sector

The increased use of partial reassessments and implementation of 5 day notice periods have several benefits, including:

- the ability to conduct more A&R visits, which will improve the currency and accuracy of ratings
- shifting A&R from being something that services prepare for to the NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority observing typical daily practice.

Partial reassessments

When services are scheduled for a partial reassessment this will include an assessment of **4 quality areas**, rather than all 7.

The services involved will receive a phone call and support from our Continuous Improvement Team and the NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority will work with them to gain feedback and support them through the A&R process.

What this looks like

- The existing rating for the areas not assessed during the partial reassessment will carry over and be combined with assessed areas. This will form the service's overall rating.
- Services must continue to maintain their self-assessment information or Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) including all 7 quality areas. This ensures high-quality practice is maintained across all areas.
- Service providers can nominate one quality area to be included in the partial reassessment.
- The other quality areas selected for assessment will be determined by the Authorised Officer, based on information the NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority holds about that service.
- In exceptional circumstances, additional quality areas for assessment may be added at the discretion of the NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority. If this occurs, it will be clearly communicated with the service provider during the visit.

- Full assessments will still be conducted where necessary, for example where a service has not yet been rated or the service has transferred to a new provider.
- Partial reassessments will continue to provide an opportunity for services to achieve and maintain an Exceeding rating. Quality uplift will be a consideration when quality areas are selected for reassessment.
- All services including state-regulated services must undergo a full A&R before they will be considered for partial reassessment.
- The NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority may conduct a partial reassessment of one or more quality areas where serious incidents occur. In these instances, the service will be unable to select the quality area(s) for reassessment.

5 day notice periods

The notice period for A&R visits is **5 business days**. Services have access to an online Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement Planning Portal which they can use at any time, not just before A&R.

What this looks like

- The NSW ECEC Regulatory Authority will give 5 business days notice for A&R visits.
- An Authorised Officer will notify the service provider 5 business days prior to their scheduled A&R of the visit date.
- Service providers will need to submit their self-assessment information or QIP within 2 days.
- Service providers will need to ensure their self-assessment information or QIP is current and up to date to support ongoing quality improvement that is part of everyday practice, and meets the requirements of the National Regulations.
- For partial reassessments, the Authorised Officer will contact the service the day before the visit to inform them which quality areas will be assessed.

Support available

The Continuous Improvement Team is available Monday to Friday to support services with A&R. Early engagement, well before your notification of A&R, will help you feel supported and ready. The team can be contacted via email at ecequalitysupport@det.nsw.edu.au or phone on 1800 619 113.

The Department of Education webpage has further information on [assessment and rating](#).

