

Portfolio Procedures

Department of Communities

Disability Services Queensland

Title: Approval of qualifications for the purposes of the *Child Care Act 2002*
Related Policy No.: 351-2
Policy Category: Child care and family support > child care

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Date of operation: 28 November 2006
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Office: Program Management Directorate
Help Contact: Office for Children – 3224 4557

Purpose:

This procedure aims to ensure consistency in the determination of the equivalency of qualifications and to provide guidelines as to the considerations of the decision maker in making the determination.

Process:

The *Child Care Regulation 2003* allows the Chief Executive or delegated decision maker (the decision maker) to approve the qualifications as being equivalent to the minimum qualification standard specified in the legislation.

The Department is also required to maintain a list of qualifications that meet the legislative minimum (section 108 of the *Child Care Regulation 2003*).

The Department may receive an application from a person with a particular qualification, or an institution offering or that has offered a qualification seeking determination in respect of whether the qualification allows the person, or people with the qualification, to work in a particular position in a licensed child care service.

The decision maker must decide the application within 90 days of receiving the application, fee and any other required information. The decision maker and the applicant may agree to an extension of the time for deciding the application. If the decision maker fails to decide this application within the 90 days or the agreed extension then the decision maker is taken to have refused the application. A decision to refuse the application is a reviewable decision for section 163 of the Act.

1. Individuals seeking approval of a current qualification not in the relevant area or recognition of work experience in child care

Where a person with a qualification in the existing Australian Qualifications Framework (eg a Diploma in Community Services (Aged Care) seeks approval of the qualification as equivalent to the qualification for a group leader in a child care centre that is not a school age care service) and the qualification is not in the approved stream for child care workers, then the decision maker will refer the person to TAFE or a registered training organisation (RTO) in order to have their prior learning and skills assessed.

If a person seeks to have their experience working in child care taken into account, the decision maker will refer the person to TAFE or a RTO for assessment of their skills.

In both instances, the application will not be approved.

2. Individuals seeking approval of an old qualification (outside of the current AQF) or an overseas qualification

Where a person with qualification not in the AQF (eg old qualification or overseas qualification) applies for approval of that qualification, then the decision maker will determine:

- (a) the level of the qualification relevant to the current AQF (ie whether the qualification is equivalent to a Certificate III, Diploma or Advanced Diploma, Bachelor or higher qualification). If the qualification is an overseas qualification, then the decision maker will request that the applicant provide a copy of the assessment from the Qualification Skills Recognition Unit in Queensland or the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR). This is an academic assessment that assesses the level of equivalence of the overseas qualification in regard to the current AQF; and
- (b) whether, on the face of the qualification, it is a qualification in early childhood studies or child care studies or one where the major or the majority of subjects were in child care or early childhood (refer to the example in section 110).

If the qualification is of the appropriate level and appears to be a qualification in child care or early childhood studies then the decision maker will approve the application.

Where there is a lack of clarity around the description or name of the course, the decision maker will request the applicant provide evidence from the institution from which the qualification was obtained, or from some other source that a vocational outcome of the qualification is child care worker or child carer.

Where:

- a qualification falls outside of the AQF because it is an old qualification or an overseas qualification;
- the decision maker is unable to reach a decision based on the information provided, and
- where the circumstances of the application warrant it the decision maker, before making a decision, will engage an external academic to consider the information provided in order to provide advice on either or both of the following:
 - the equivalent level of the qualification within the AQF (i.e. Certificate III, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Bachelor etc); and/or
 - whether the content of the course constitutes child care studies or early childhood studies in the broadest sense.

3. Applications under section 109 of the *Child Care Regulation 2003*

Where the decision maker receives an application from an institution or person under section 109 of the Regulation for a determination in respect of a qualification (rather than the particular qualification of an individual), the decision maker will approve the application where:

- the qualification is at the appropriate level in the AQF; and
- a vocational outcome of the qualification is child care worker or child carer.

***NOTE:** For carers in school age care services and coordinators in family day care, the fields of qualification are broader than child care and early childhood studies. Applications by persons wishing to work in those areas will be assessed with reference to the broader range of fields of study.

Delegations:

The Manager, Statewide Quality Team for child care licensing is the delegated decision maker in respect of qualifications.

LINKS:

Related legislation:

Child Care Regulation 2003 (sections 110-120)

Form/Fact sheets:

Child Care Form 20 – Application for determination of qualifications

Fact Sheet – Staff Qualifications (Centre based services long day care, kindergartens, limited hours care)

Fact Sheet – Staff Qualifications for existing school age care services

Rescinded Policies

Approval of qualifications for the purposes of the *Child Care Act 2002* (351-1)