

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AND PROCEDURE

A commitment by early childhood educators to ongoing professional development is the key to effective continuous improvement and the provision of quality childcare. *Professional development* is a term used which includes workshops, conferences, in-service training sessions, formal studying, readings, and professional research.

Working in conjunction with the *Professional Development Policy*, this procedure provides guidelines for management and educators to review and update individual Professional Development Plans detecting strengths, interests and goals and develop an overall plan for the service.

*Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations (R. 84, 118, 126, 136 and 168) NQS QA 7: Element 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1, 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 Governance practices and procedures*  
*Related Policy: Professional Development Policy*

| Step 1 – Allocate a professional development budget<br>(Completed by Approved Provider/Director / Nominated Supervisor) |   |  |
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| 1   | Management should develop a realistic budget for professional learning for all staff members each year. The annual budget should identify the cost for compliance training for each staff member, induction and training for new employees, individual educator's professional development, cost of subscriptions for journals, webinars, wages for backfilling staff when attending PL, allowances for travel, leadership development, mentoring opportunities, teacher registration and other opportunities identified. |  |
| Step 2 – Review Job Descriptions<br>(Completed by Director / Nominated Supervisor)                                      |   |  |
| 2   | Review and amend (if necessary) any Job Descriptions to ensure they clearly represent and communicate the role and responsibilities of the role. [This step should be completed before establishing each educator's <i>Professional Development Plan</i> .]   |  |
| Step 3 – Complete Ambitions and Reflections<br>(Facilitated by Nominated Supervisor and educators)                      |   |  |
| 1   | Provide each team member with an <i>Ambitions and Reflections form</i> to complete. Engage staff in decision-making about their own learning and career development. Ask for a level of honesty and detail when identifying strengths and their professional learning needs.  |  |
| 2   | Ensure all staff members understand how decisions will be made about team/individual professional learning for the year. [Can individuals request to complete a course? Who will approve the process of paying for any course or event? Is there a specific budget?]  |  |

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|  | When allocating professional development funds, management needs to be confident it is applied in the right places to ensure that these experiences make a real impact to the service.  |  |
| 3  | See <i>Ambitions and Reflections form</i>   |  |
| <b>Step 4 – Review Ambitions and Reflections<br/>(Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader)</b>   |   |  |
| 1  | Once the <i>Ambitions and Reflections</i> forms have been completed, the Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader can now review the information and gain an understanding of each team member's personal goals, areas for development and aspirations in their role and career. This process provides insight into each team member's passion and natural or unique ability.  |  |
| 2  | This process may identify large-scale professional learning opportunities for several educators such as conferences that may be inspiring and energising or specific learning areas identified to address issues such as behaviour or wellbeing.  |  |
| 3  | Consideration should be made to provide compliance training for all educators and staff including mandatory reporting, WHS.   |  |
| <b>Step 5 – SWOT Analysis</b><br>A simple SWOT analysis can be used to help form clear objectives (Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats) |   |  |
| 1  | The Educational Leader can tailor each team member's strengths and unique abilities with their goals to create a <i>Professional Development Plan</i> for each educator. Consideration needs to be given to the educators' current role and relevance of goals, the service's strategic goals and areas for improvement identified in the QIP   |  |
| 2  | See <i>SWOT for Professional Development</i>  |  |
| <b>Step 6 – Create the Professional Development Plan<br/>(Educational Leader)</b>  |   |  |
| 1  | To complete this part of the process the Educational Leader needs to meet with each educator and unpack the <i>Ambitions and Reflections form</i> and identify each individual's areas of strength in practice and areas that may require additional support. This ensures educators are provided with opportunities to engage with rich and meaningful professional learning and to receive support to construct goals in a collaborative manner. The <i>Professional Development Plan</i> can then be documented. |  |
| 2  | See <i>Professional Development Plan – template</i>   |  |
| 3  | The <i>Professional Development Plan</i> should be viewed as a dynamic plan as educators may amend and adjust their plan throughout the year.   |  |
| <b>Step 7 – Source In-Services and Workshops<br/>(Educational Leader)</b>  |   |  |
| 1  | Now that the Educational Leader understands each team member's goals, strengths, ambitions and areas for further development, they can make informed decisions about  |  |

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|   | sourcing workshops, webinars and in-services that best accommodate the unique needs of each team member.  |  |
| 2   | Ideally professional development will be identified in the service's Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).  |  |
| 3   | Consider a variety of learning opportunities for staff members. For example: webinars, e-learning, professional conversations/mentoring, courses, programs, conferences, events.  |  |
| 4   | An overall service <i>Professional Development Plan</i> may be drafted to assist in identifying clear goals and addressing priorities identified in the Quality Improvement Plan. A service Professional Development Plan assists in engaging all team members, provides transparency of management decisions, priorities and financial investment and promotes enthusiasm for ongoing learning for all team members. |  |
| <b>Step 8 – Schedule Training<br/>(Educational Leader)</b>                                  |   |  |
| 1   | Training and workshops can be scheduled and added to service calendar in line with the service's professional learning budget/resources.  |  |
| <b>Step 9 – Professional Development Records<br/>(Educational Leader, educators)</b>        |   |  |
| 1   | A <i>Professional Development Record</i> is completed for each educator once training has been undertaken to ensure a record is kept. Educators seeking accreditation can use this record as evidence of professional learning.   |  |
| 2   | See <i>Professional Developmental Record</i>  |  |
| <b>Step 10 – Professional Development Reflection<br/>(Educational leader and educators)</b> |   |  |
| 1   | The National Quality Framework states continually reflecting on practice assists educators to become increasingly thoughtful about their work and motivated to explore new ideas and approaches. Following completion of any professional learning, educators will complete a <i>Professional Development Reflections</i> form.   |  |
| 2   | See <i>Professional Development Reflections form</i>  |  |
| <b>Step 11 – Share new knowledge<br/>(Educational Leader and educators)</b>                 |   |  |
| 1   | To create a culture of continuous improvement, the Educational Leader will work with educators to reflect upon new learning and present a summary of important points learnt from professional learning with the whole team at future staff meetings. This process assists in educators actively applying new understanding, ideas and approaches and extends their knowledge with others.                            |  |
| 2   | The Educational Leader may provide feedback to the educator through discussions, observations of professional practice or collegial activity.   |  |

**Step 12 – Review****(Educational leader and educators)**

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| 1 | The Educational Leader will review each educator/staff member's <i>Professional Development Plan</i> and <i>Professional Development Record</i> as part of the annual performance review. The review may include written feedback and/or purposeful dialogue that will continue to support the educator's growth and career development. |  |
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**Professional Development**

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| 1 | Professional development is most effective when it is identified collaboratively by the Nominated Supervisor, the Educational Leader and educators as the new learning reflects and contributes to ongoing quality improvement                         |  |
| 2 | The above process provides the Educational Leader with the opportunity to identify the unique or special abilities of individual team members  |  |
| 3 | This framework assists the Service to develop priorities for professional learning and develop a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning to assist educators develop the skills and knowledge to deliver quality education and care |  |
| 4 | This process assists the Educational Leader to provide effective professional learning focusing on developing and enhancing educators' understandings, strategies and skills that is a core component in an ongoing professional learning cycle        |  |
| 5 | Collaboration provides a more accurate and effective selection of professional learning opportunities for all team members   |  |
| 6 | Collaboration with educators encourages meaningful critical reflection on their practices and performance and helps to create a culture of continuous improvement.   |  |