The educational leader role in department preschools

This online learning course supports preschool supervisors to understand the expectations of their role and strategies for effective educational leadership.

# Learner journal



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## User guide

This learner journal consists of a range of tasks to support you in consolidating, localising and extending your learning. It is a tool to facilitate ongoing learning, collegial discussions and capacity building.

For each module, there are four tasks:

1. Look for and review
2. Lead a reflective discussion with the preschool team
3. Discuss with your principal/nominated supervisor
4. Check in with your P-2 Initiatives Officer

### Course outcomes

It is intended that by completing ‘The educational leader- preschool supervisor modules’ and the learner journal tasks, learners will:

* understand the role and expectations of the educational leader
* develop and apply effective leadership skills to lead
  + the development and implementation of a high-quality educational program which utilises assessment and teaching cycles
  + self-assessment and quality improvement planning processes including scaffolding reflective practice and self-assessment
  + embedded practice through effective procedures.

## Course content

**Module 1 – Introduction to the role**

* The role of the educational leader
* A model of educational leadership
* Effective leadership.

**Module 2 – Program and practice**

* What does the educational leader need to know?
* What does the educational leader need to do?
* How does the educational leader drive critical reflection?

**Module 3 – Continuous improvement**

* Guiding continuous improvement
* Links between preschool and whole school improvement planning
* Engaging with the quality improvement cycle.

**Module 4 – Embedding practice through procedures**

* Requirements around procedures
* Reviewing procedures
* Embedding practice – procedures in action.

### Required prior learning

Prior to commencing **module 1**, please complete:

* [Leading and managing department preschools](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/professional-learning/leading-and-managing--department-preschools)
* [EYLF: Guiding early childhood curriculum and pedagogy](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/professional-learning/early-years-learning-framework-modules).

Prior to commencing **module 2**, please complete/listen to:

* [Preschool programming and planning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/professional-learning/preschool-programming-and-planning-)
* Early Learning matters [Early Years Learning Framework](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/early-learning-podcasts#The4) podcasts.

Prior to commencing **module 4**, please read:

* [Leading and operating department departmental preschool guidelines](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/department-preschools).

It is also recommended that learners complete:

* [Building quality in department preschools.](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/professional-learning/building-quality-in-department-preschools--)

### Module 1 – Introduction to the role

The following tasks will scaffold you to collaborate with your preschool team and to apply your learning.

#### Task 1 – Look for and review

Identify within the preschool the location of hard copies of these key source documents:

* [Education and Care Services National Law](https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-104a)
* [Education and Care Services National Regulations](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653)
* [Guide to the National Quality Framework (PDF 3.5MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf)
* [Leading and operating department preschool guidelines](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/department-preschools)

#### Task 2 – Lead a reflective discussion with the team

Ask the team, including relieving and release staff, to reflect upon and evaluate the induction they received when commencing in their role.

Use prompting questions such as:

* Which areas of the induction were most useful?
* What additional information would you have found helpful?
* Which information was not necessary, or presented too early in your role?

#### Task 3 – Discuss with your leader

This might be your principal, or if you are a principal, your DEL. Discuss:

* Clarify the expected roles and responsibilities of the preschool educational leader in your school.
* Discuss the benefits and successes of the preschool. What are the key challenges?

#### Task 4 – Check in your P-2 Initiatives Officer

Ask your P-2 Initiatives Officer for clarification of any areas or aspects of your role you are unsure of.

##### Module 1 notes

### Module 2 – Program and practice

The following tasks will scaffold you to collaborate with your preschool team and to apply your learning.

#### Task 1 – Look for and review

Look for and review how the preschool educators document children's learning.

#### Task 2 – Lead a reflective discussion with the team

Encourage the team to critically reflect on the effectiveness of documentation, addressing questions such as:

* Does planning documentation focus on individual and group learning goals?
* Where does documentation include evidence of intentional and responsive teaching strategies?
* Has assessment data been analysed in terms of the distance travelled for individual children?
* Looking at all documentation holistically, are all stages of the assessment and planning cycle evident? Are the links between each stage apparent?

#### Task 3 – Discuss with your principal

This might be your principal, or if you are a principal, your DEL. Discuss:

Raise and discuss potential opportunities for educators to engage in professional learning around the educational program and its documentation.

#### Task 4 – Check in with your P-2 Initiatives Officer

Ask your P-2 Initiatives Officer:

* for their perspective on how the preschool’s documentation and implementation of assessment and planning cycles might be strengthened.
* to share how other preschools document their educational program and children’s learning. Is there an aspect of a different approach that may improve practices in your preschool?

##### Module 2 notes

### Module 3 – Continuous improvement

The following tasks will scaffold you to collaborate with your preschool team and to apply your learning.

#### Task 1 – Look for and review

Look for and review the preschool’s quality improvement plan or self-assessment working document.

#### Task 2 – Lead a reflective discussion with the team

Encourage the team to critically reflect, addressing questions such as:

* What are team members’ understandings of the purpose and benefits of self-assessment?
* How are chapters three and four of the ‘Guide to the National Quality Framework’ used to support self-assessment?

#### Task 3 – Discuss with your principal

This might be your principal, or if you are a principal, your DEL. Discuss:

* Do any of the preschool’s improvement goals align to the school’s strategic goals?
* Are there opportunities to strengthen the links between whole school and preschool improvement processes?

#### Task 4 – Check in with your P-2 Initiatives Officer

Ask your P-2 Initiatives Officer to review a quality area of the preschool’s quality improvement plan or self-assessment working document in terms of evidence of the exceeding themes.

##### Module 3 notes

### Module 4 – Embedding practice through procedures

The following tasks will scaffold you to collaborate with your preschool team and to apply your learning.

#### Task 1 – Look for and review

Look for and review preschool procedures, reflecting on:

* how easy they would be for a new educator to understand
* their accuracy
* whether or not advice from relevant authorities has informed their development
* how relieving and casual staff and families access them.

#### Task 2 – Lead a reflective discussion with the team

Encourage the team to critically reflect, addressing questions such as:

* How do procedures support embedded practice?
* Are there times when the procedures are challenging to implement? If so, why?

#### Task 3 – Discuss with your principal

This might be your principal, or if you are a principal, your DEL. Discuss:

* How do the preschool procedures align with any related whole school procedures?
* What opportunities are there to improve links between preschool and whole school procedures?

#### Task 4 – Check in with your P-2 Initiatives Officer

Invite your P-2 Initiatives Officer to contribute to the review of specific procedures.

##### Module 4 notes

## ****Recommended reading****

Relevant to all modules:

* [Education and Care Services National Law](https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-104a)
* [Education and Care Services National Regulations](https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653)
* [Guide to the National Quality Framework (PDF 3.5MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Guide-to-the-NQF-September-2020.pdf)
* [Leading and operating department preschool guidelines](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/department-preschools)

### Module 1

* [ACECQA Information sheet – Quality Area 4: Belonging, being and becoming for educators (PDF 1.5MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA4_BelongingAndBecomingForEducators.pdf)
* [ACECQA Information sheet - Quality Area 7: Educational leadership and team building (PDF 1.2MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-05/QA7_EducationalLeadershipAndTeamBuilding.pdf)
* [ACECQA Information sheet – Quality Area 7: The role of the educational leader (PDF 2.2MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-05/QA7_TheRoleOfTheEducationalLeader.pdf)
* [The Educational leader resource (PDF 4MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-03/TheEducationalLeaderResource.pdf)

### Module 2

* [ACECQA Information sheet – Quality Area 1: Developing a culture of learning through reflective practice (PDF 2MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-09/QA1_DevelopingaCultureofLearningThroughReflectivePractice.pdf)
* [Belonging, being and becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia (PDF 703KB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf)
* [Educator’s guide to the early years learning framework for Australia (PDF 8.7MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/acecqa/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/educators_guide_to_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia_2.pdf)
* [National Quality Framework information sheet – Guidelines for documenting children’s learning (PDF 134KB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-01/GuidelinesForDocumentingChildrensLearning%20.pdf)
* [Thinking about the EYLF – thoughts to inspire (PDF 2.8MB)](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/eylf-postcards.pdf)
* [ACECQA blog – We hear you: Documentation – what, why and how](https://wehearyou.acecqa.gov.au/2019/08/30/documentation-what-why-and-how/)

### Module 3

* [ACECQA blog - We hear you: The cycle of self-assessment and continuous improvement: What do you need to consider? Part 1](https://wehearyou.acecqa.gov.au/2018/03/02/cycle-of-self-assessment-and-continuous-improvement/)
* [ACECQA Information sheet – Quality Area 7: Using complaints to support continuous improvement (PDF 1.1MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-04/QA7_UsingComplaintsToSupportContinuousImprovement.pdf)
* [Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ECA-COE-Brochure-web-2019.pdf)
* [Ethics in Action – A practical guide to implementing the ECA Code of Ethics](https://shop.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/product/coeeia/)
* [ACECQA information sheet – Developing and reviewing your quality improvement plan (PDF 687KB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/DevelopingandReviewingYourQualityImprovementPlan.pdf)
* [ACECQA information sheet - New guidance on determining exceeding NQS for standards (PDF 176KB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/NewGuidanceDetermingExceedingNQS.pdf)
* [ACECQA information sheet – Practical ideas to support continuous quality improvement (PDF 1.4MB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-05/Practical-ideas-to-support-quality-improvement_0.pdf)

### Module 4

[How to develop and update policies successfully (without the stress) (PDF 892KB)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-01/DevelopAndUpdatePoliciesSuccessfully.PDF)

### Videos

Featured in course:

* [ACECQA: Unpacking the educational leader resource](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOVK9yOjpsM&feature=youtu.be)
* [ACECQA: Continuous improvement in practice](https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=9pNXOCn5xHw&feature=youtu.be).

Recommended:

* [ACECQA: Perspectives of an Early Childhood Service Educational Leader](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srAkAVWw7Rw&feature=youtu.be)
* [ACECQA Podcast 1 – Documenting children’s learning and development](https://youtu.be/i7-bMqLfm6w)
* [ACECQA Podcast 2 – Effective documentation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suSlYDXXAM8)
* [ACECQA Podcast 3 – Documentation – walking through the relevant requirements](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kRlsMuOjsY)

## Keeping up to date, inspired and connected

This section provides links to helpful websites and information.

### Social media

[NSW DoE preschools and early intervention classes Yammer group](https://www.yammer.com/det.nsw.edu.au/)

### Websites

* [NSW Department of Education Early Learning](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning)
* [Australian Children’s Education and Care Authority (ACECQA)](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/)

### Newsletters

* Early Learning e-newsletter – accessed by members through [Microsoft Teams / Early Learning and Schools/EL Newsletter](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/entity/2a527703-1f6f-4559-a332-d8a7d288cd88/_djb2_msteams_prefix_3660554881?context=%7B%22subEntityId%22%3Anull%2C%22channelId%22%3A%2219%3Abded37752e1d45b3bc48e20ffc7b9250%40thread.skype%22%7D&groupId=7df231e2-acc8-42fb-b711-d37c1cfb8f63&tenantId=05a0e69a-418a-47c1-9c25-9387261bf991)
* [NSW DoE Early Childhood Education - Quality in Practice](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/whats-happening-in-the-early-childhood-education-sector/news/subscribe-to-newsletter)

### Podcasts and blogs

Podcasts:

* [Early Learning matters](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/early-learning/early-learning-podcasts)
* [The Early Education Show](https://www.earlyeducationshow.com/about)
* [Early Childhood Research Podcast](https://www.lizs-early-learning-spot.com/the-early-childhood-research-podcast-an-introduction-0/)

Blogs:

* [Early Childhood Australia – The Spoke](http://thespoke.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/)
* [Community Early Learning Australia – Amplify](https://www.cela.org.au/amplify/)
* [ACECQA – We hear you](https://wehearyou.acecqa.gov.au/)

### We’re here to help!

P-2 Initiatives Officers and the Early Learning team work collaboratively to provide support to department preschools. Find P-2 Initiatives Officers’ contact details in the DoE staff portal essential ‘School support contacts’.

Contact Early Learning on 1300 083 698 or via email [earlylearning@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:earlylearning@det.nsw.edu.au).