

Children's Services Central is aware that while some services are clear about the changes happening for children's services, others are getting confused. With acronyms proliferating, no wonder it is hard to keep track. But it is not just the acronyms! With so many changes afoot, services can be forgiven for being confused.

For those mystified by everything they are hearing and reading and want clear information on meaning of acronyms, here we present this information on a question and answer basis (based on real questions received by Children's Services Central) and also as a diagram for those who think better in pictures.

**Q: Which services need to know about the changes?**

The new National Quality Agenda (NQA) covers long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools. Early years services need to implement the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Occasional Care Services, MACS, and Mobile services are currently not covered by the National Quality Agenda so most of the changes will not affect them immediately.

**Q: Why are all the changes happening?**

All the governments in Australia agreed to improve the quality of children's services. They have chosen the things that they believe will most increase the quality—implementing a national curriculum, improving staff-child ratios and ensuring all staff have a qualification.

**Q: I thought I understood the five outcomes of *Belonging Being and Becoming* (EYLF), but someone told me there are seven areas!**

The **EYLF** does have five outcomes:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity;
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world;
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing;
4. Children are confident and involved learners; and
5. Children are effective communicators.

There are seven quality areas in the **National Quality Standard (NQS)** which contribute to the quality of early childhood education and care. Services will be assessed on:

1. Educational program and practice;
2. Children's health and safety;
3. Physical environment;
4. Staffing arrangements;
5. Relationships with children;
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities; and
7. Leadership and service management.

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# ★ ROUNDUP

## LEANNE GIBBS APPOINTED AS CEO

Leanne Gibbs, previously Manager of Children's Services Central, has now been appointed as CEO of Children's Services Central and Community Child Care

Co-operative (NSW). Leanne has always had a passion for the professional development needs of children's services staff, spending three years as Manager of Professional Development of KU Children's Services and in professional development with SDN Children's Services and Lady Gowrie Child Centre.

Leanne holds a Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood), a post-graduate Diploma (Teaching Gifted and Talented Children) and a Master in Politics and Public Policy. She has worked as a director and teacher in long day care and preschool, a lecturer and tutor at university and TAFE, a local government children's services officer, a children's services advisor for Community Services and the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) and has published and trained widely on sector issues.



## KEEP THEM SAFE: MANDATORY REPORTER GUIDE

Are you aware of the online Mandatory Reporter Guide that has been developed to assist mandatory reporters to determine whether or not a child at risk needs to be reported to the Community Services Helpline?

The Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) is an online interactive tool that guides and supports mandatory reporters' professional judgment in responding to children and young people at risk.

- Mandatory reporters choose a 'decision tree' and are led through a series of questions which will help them decide whether or not there is 'risk of significant harm'.
- The MRG provides definitions and examples that mandatory reporters can access to support them in making an assessment.

For information, go to: [www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au](http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au)

Children's Services Central is the Professional Support Co-ordinator in New South Wales and is an initiative funded by the Australian Government under the Inclusion and Professional Support Program. Children's Services Central is managed by a consortium of key organisations that resource and support the sectors of children's services in New South Wales.

## Children's Services Central

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## CHANGES TO ASSOCIATIONS LAW

Is your service incorporated as an Association? The new *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* and *Associations Incorporation Regulation 2010* commenced on 1 July 2010.

The most important changes include:

- Replacing the associations 'rules' with a 'constitution';
- Introducing a two-tiered financial reporting system;
- More flexibility for meetings and resolutions;
- Introducing statutory duties for committee members;
- More choice for official address;
- Common seal will no longer be required;
- Introducing the requirement of Australian residency for at least three committee members.

For most children's services in NSW, the changes will not require any immediate action. Children's Services Central recommends that services that are incorporated as an association look at the detailed description of the changes on the fact sheet entitled 'Changes to Associations Legislation', available from the NSW Fair Trading website at [www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au). NSW Fair Trading will also be conducting free information seminars and presentations at various locations around NSW in the coming months.

## \$350 FOR FDC CARERS

A one-off 'capability grant' of \$350 will be paid to new and existing family day care carers employed by approved family day care schemes, as at 30 June 2010.

According to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), this initiative will, 'expand the capacity of family day care carers to meet the broader objectives of the Government's early childhood education and care reform agenda'.

Carers may use the grant for expenses associated with meeting the necessary training requirements involved in operating a home-based childcare service in line with the National Quality Framework (NQF).

The grant may also be used for the purchase of equipment to provide an educational and appropriate environment for children in family day care. This includes the costs associated with meeting:

- The educational needs of children through the purchase of new equipment;
- The costs involved in strengthening the capacity and skills of staff by purchasing educational equipment, providing access to online training opportunities or enabling staff to attend training opportunities on-site or off-site, and/or age-appropriate equipment that meets applicable state or territory legislative requirements, for example, car restraints and booster seats.

Family Day Care Australia (FDCA) is administering the grants and has stated that they will be processed over a three-month period from July to September.

In announcing the grants, the Minister, Kate Ellis, said that: 'We are committed to supporting the family day care sector to deliver quality care to the 100,000 Australian children who they care for each day'.

For more information, call the Grant Hotline on **1300 392 311** or email: [fdcgrant@fdca.com.au](mailto:fdcgrant@fdca.com.au)



# ALPHABET SOUP

(continued from front page)

## Q: Will children's services still be licensed and accredited?

After the changes are fully introduced (January 2012), the two separate processes will be combined into one. All NSW preschools, long day care services, OOSH services and family day care services across Australia will be governed by a regulation, which will be based on the National Quality Standard (NQS). Services will be given an approval to operate and each service will be being rated on the quality of service they provide in each of the seven quality areas.

The ratings are:

- Unsatisfactory;
- National Quality Standard;
- Excellent;
- Operating Level;
- High Quality; and

As you will not be able to operate unless you improve an Unsatisfactory rating, and the Operating Level rating only exists for new services, most services will be assessed as meeting the National Quality Standard, or at High Quality, which is exceeding the standard or recognised a leader in the sector (Excellent).

## Q: When this happens, who will assess our service?

Community Services (the new name for DoCS) will be responsible for giving services an approval to operate and rating services against the National Quality Standard.

## Q: How often will we be assessed?

For most services, it will be every two to three years—as well as spot checks and other visits.

## Q: Will there be a new National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC)?

There will be a new national body called the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA), which will oversee the National Quality Standard but Community Services will be managing the rating and spot checks, in the same manner that the NCAC does under the current system.

## Q: Will NCAC continue?

The Commonwealth Government will cease funding the NCAC from the end of next year.

## Q: Why do we have to implement the Early Years Learning Framework?

Use of the Early Years Learning Framework is an integral part of the first quality area under the National Quality Standard—Educational program and practice. For your service to rate well under the new system, you must be using the EYLF.

## Q: Our service is an OOSH service—do we have to implement a new framework?

Early this year, it was announced that there will be a national school age care framework—a draft of this will be available at the end of August. Please see the article on page 6 for more information.

## Q: What are the most important things our early years service should do to prepare for all this?

- Implement the EYLF at your service;
- Work out how your service will implement the new ratios—1:4 for under-2s by January next year and 1:5 for toddlers by 2016;
- Work out how you will work to upgrade your staff qualifications—most qualification changes need to be done by 2014.

## Q: I don't have much time to read—what are the two most important things I should read?

You must read *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework*, if you haven't already done so. The two other documents that will really help you are:

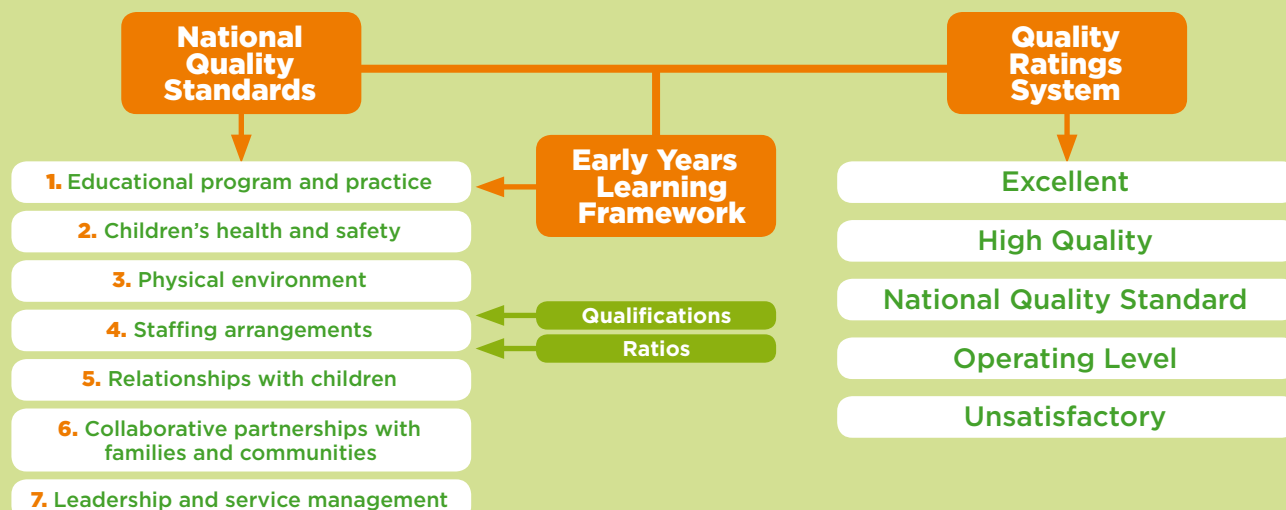
- DEEWR: Information for Services Fact Sheet;
- National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care.

Children's Services Central has put all these together in the one place ([www.cscentral.org.au/reading](http://www.cscentral.org.au/reading)) along with our handy timeline to the changes.

## Q: How do I find out more?

Come to the National Quality Framework information sessions that Children's Services Central is having over the next few months. (But make sure you do the suggested reading first!) Go to: [www.cscentral.org.au/pd](http://www.cscentral.org.au/pd)

## NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK



# Training as fast as we can!

Once again, Children's Services Central has been overwhelmed with the number of people wanting to book into our EYLF professional development courses. In the current calendar (July–November 2010), we offered our popular 'Belonging, Being and Becoming—Putting the Early Years Learning Framework into Practice' course in over 30 separate locations across NSW. Almost all are now fully booked, but we are adding additional courses wherever possible.



It is important to remember that all workshop sessions and learning programs on the Professional Development Calendar have foundations in the Framework and will enhance understanding of the elements of the EYLF.

We also have a range of other specific EYLF courses on offer. It is important to remember that the 'Putting the EYLF into Practice' session is intended as an introduction to the EYLF. If you are already familiar with the basics, one of the other courses on offer may be more useful. Consider the following courses:

- Implementing the EYLF at Service Level – A Webinar Series;
- Practicing Early Years Learning Framework – An Intentional Teaching Approach;
- The Art of Teaching – Exploring Early Years Learning Framework in a Family Day Care Context;
- Leadership and the Early Years Learning Framework – a Whole Service Approach;
- Documenting Children's Learning and the Early Years Learning Framework.

Go to: [www.cscentral.org.au/pd](http://www.cscentral.org.au/pd) to book into any of these courses.

## Community Services funds NQF training for preschools

In wonderful news for NSW community-based preschools, Community Services has provided funding to ensure that they can attend information sessions around the National Quality Framework (NQF) at the same subsidised rate as Australian Government approved children's services. This is in addition to the subsidy announced in the last issue of *Central*, which allows preschools to attend subsidised EYLF training.

The National Quality Framework will change how preschools operate, how they are regulated, and how their quality is assessed. The full framework will be implemented from January 2012 but preschools need to start planning now! Unlike other service types such as long day care, family day care or OOSH services, preschools have not previously been subject to Quality Assurance through the NCAC.

There are two major areas that will require new skill development for preschool staff:

### 1. Completion of a service self-assessment and a quality improvement plan

Because preschools have never had to complete this sort of assessment and plan before, preschool directors will need to acquire skills around the processes services can use to undertake the assessment and planning process. Coupled with these skills are advanced skills in policy formation and in ensuring practices reflect policies. Although most preschools have a raft of policies in place, they have not necessarily needed to demonstrate that these policies are best practice or are reflected in service procedures.

### 2. Demonstrating quality

Under the NQF services will need to show that they are meeting the quality areas, standards and elements of the National Quality Standard. Under the current NSW licensing system, preschools have had only to assert that they are meeting the Children's Services Regulation, not demonstrate how they meet it, as they will now be required to do under the NQF. The preschool workforce will need to be skilled in determining which practices can be observed, which can be explained or which must be demonstrated.

Preschool staff should book into one of the Children's Services Central NQF Information Sessions being held later this year (see above).

Additional preschool specific professional development is being developed by Community Child Care Co-operative in association with other sector peak organisations to ensure that preschool staff can develop the new skills they will require.



The ‘Unpacking’ conference series has become a space for discussion, debate and reflection regarding influences from the schools of Reggio Emilia. Unpacking Listening—the 12th ‘Unpacking’ conference—challenged delegates to reflect on the ways in which listening and silences operate within early years curriculum. The Institute of Early Childhood at Macquarie University and Semann & Slattery run the ‘Unpacking’ conferences.

Children’s Services Central offered sponsored positions for five children’s services staff to the most recent conference entitled ‘Unpacking listening: language, silence and spaces’. Below is an edited report by Pauline Pryor who was a recipient of one of the scholarships.

I was privileged to attend the 2010 ‘Unpacking’ conference at Macquarie University with the assistance of a Children’s Services Central scholarship. The event fulfilled its promise to unpack the many layers of listening. Conference delegates were challenged to reflect on the nature of effective listening and the value of silence, and then to delve deeper into consideration of behaviours that can silence people and influence whose voices are heard. While the focus of the conference was early childhood, the discussions had broad relevance.

Associate Professor Kari Carlsen reminded us that listening involves all the senses. We can think of listening as experiencing through sights, smells and touch as well as hearing. Kirsty Ljergen expanded on this by urging us to listen authentically and intently with respect, encouraging us to look at the person and concentrate on what they are meaning. When we are quiet we give others time to talk. This is especially important with children. We all have a responsibility to model listening to children and to encourage them to listen to each other.

Our documentation is a form of listening, as it helps us to attend more carefully, to discover patterns and themes in play, to discover why children are doing things and what they are trying to figure out. Guest speakers from New Zealand and students from the university showed delegates many examples of learning stories, reminding us that documentation is much more than simple observations.

Associate Professor Jane Torr shared with delegates an

interesting study of the shared reading of picture books. The study showed that there can be a gap between children’s and adults’ interpretation of books as children are still learning to ‘read’ visual images. While we draw on broad experiences, children make links between books and their limited personal world, often making surprising interpretations of illustrations. The gap in interpretation is a window for us to listen to children, to hear their view, to reflect on the book and broaden their understandings.

The nature of silence was discussed in a panel conversation. Silence can be oppressive when we fail to challenge negative or unfair comments. When we are silent we allow others to speak. But we can silence others in many ways: when we don’t give them attention, when we interrupt, and when our body language indicates we are not interested or we don’t allow the values of others to be considered.

A second panel conversation ended with a powerful reflection about who is heard in our services. It is often white, middle class, heterosexual, females representing mainstream religions that are heard, and often the most verbal children and adults who are heard the loudest.

As I work in a small regional service with a limited budget, my attendance at the conference was only possible with the assistance of the scholarship. I returned to my service with renewed passion to listen authentically and to share all of the thoughts from the event with my colleagues and the families in our community. Thank you Macquarie and Children’s Services Central.

## A Framework for School Age Care

On May 27, the Minister for Youth and Children's Services, Kate Ellis, announced the decision to support the creation of a national school age care framework. The development of this framework followed successful representations made to the Minister in meetings with the National Out of School Hours Services Association (NOSHSA) last year.

**Robyn Monro Miller** reports.

The announcement was welcomed by NOSHSA, which views it as government investment into the sector. Network of Community Activities is the peak body representing NSW at the national level and has been active in advocating that out of school hours services must have their own specific framework to refer to in the new National Quality Framework (NQF).

The school age care framework will complement the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) but will be contextualised to meet the unique needs of school age children using all service types: out of school hours, family day care and long day care.

The development of the two frameworks will provide a consistent set of outcomes for children 0–12 years that will support and enrich current practice in Australian children's services. The framework for school age care will acknowledge and guide best practice and will have the ability to be contextualised to meet the needs and interests of the children

attending each individual service. In addition, the new school age care framework will support and guide service delivery within the National Quality Framework to ensure that the distinct needs of school age children are met.

Play spaces, such as those found in out of school hours care services are rich learning environments and this new framework will acknowledge that the play opportunities and the range of experiences that happen in school age care are all learning opportunities and fundamentally important to the development of children. The framework will openly acknowledge that play is learning, raising the profile of play in the community.

While play will feature prominently, there is also acknowledgement that not all children want to engage in free play during their leisure time and opportunities for children to try new experiences and activities should be included in any quality program.

The existence of the framework for school age care will provide acknowledgement that a child's right to play and leisure, as demonstrated through Commonwealth Government's commitment to Article 31 in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), is equal in importance to Article 28—the child's right to education.

The Minister's announcement heralded much media comment and debate including inaccurate reports that children were being forced into an extended school day and that the framework would diminish play opportunities for children. NOSHSA responded quickly in the media to dispel these inaccuracies as the framework is not to be seen as guidelines and play and leisure will underpin the framework as play and leisure are seen as opportunities for learning.

A national steering group has been formed to guide the process of developing the framework. The steering group is made up of state, territory and Commonwealth Government representatives, NCAC and two representatives from NOSHSA—Robyn Monro Miller (NSW) and Kylie Branelly (Queensland). The inclusion of peak body representatives on such a high-level group has been recognised as a first in recent history and reinforces the respect the Commonwealth Government has for the OSHC sector.

An academic consultant has been appointed to write the framework and a draft will be available for consultation with the community from late August. The timeframes for the consultation process are extremely tight, ensuring that the framework will be ready in time for piloting in the new National Quality Framework from 1 January 2012.

It is planned to hold consultations in each state and territory capital city that will involve round table group work to provide feedback on, and inform, the draft document. Additional online consultation tools will also be available for those unable to make the consultations.

To stay in touch with the latest developments go to:

**[www.netoosh.org.au](http://www.netoosh.org.au)**



# FDC:

## Challenges, Changes, Choices

'Challenges, Changes, Choices' is the theme of the NSW Family Day Care Association's 2010 Annual Professional Development and Networking Forum to be held at the Sydney Marriott Hotel, Sydney from 19–21 September, 2010.

Once again, the year ahead is one of change for the early childhood sector with the National Quality Framework (NQF), Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and National Standards all impacting on Family Day Care. Recently, the NSWFDCA conducted a needs analysis survey of its members, and the conference has been developed in response to the findings of this survey, as well as the many changes that are taking place in the sector.

The title, keynote speakers and selection of professional development workshops have been chosen to inform, inspire and educate Family Day Care and In Home Care staff across NSW. The conference aims to connect staff and delegates by providing opportunities to address issues and to network with one another.

Speakers and presenters from various government departments and agencies will disseminate up-to-date information on current trends and amendments that effect FDC. This will ensure delegates are properly informed and are able to pass onto their staff and carers improved practices and information that will increase quality and promote best outcomes for children.

Keynote speakers at the conference are Maggie Dent and Tan Jose, and workshops on offer include: Recent Enhancements to CCMS, Guiding Children's Behaviour, Road Safety for FDC, Administration Support for Carers, Early Years Learning Framework, CDO Panel, Child Protection, Management Committees—what do they really do? Modernising FDC Co-ordination Units, National Quality Framework, Indigenous Australian Resources, OH&S Risk Management, Newsletters and Flyers: How To Make yours Better, Media Management in Crisis Situations, Record Keeping and Retention, Sustainability in Childcare, Managing Stress, Authorised Supervisor—Chain of Authority.

The conference gala dinner will be held on the Monday of the conference at The Dome Restaurant in The Arthouse Hotel. This is an opportunity for delegates, NSW FDC staff and NSW Family Day Care Association Life Members to network.

For further information please contact Mandy or Robert on **1800 157 818**, press 2 for FDC.

**LDCs and preschools:**  
Have you booked into  
an NQF info session yet?



These two-hour information sessions explore the changes that long day care services and preschools will need to implement as a result of the National Quality Framework (NQF). The sessions will give the most up-to-date information available about changes to staff qualifications and ratios and accreditation/licensing systems. They will outline the seven Quality Areas and the Standards underpinning them, as well as the five levels of the rating system, and will explain what we know about how the new system is intended to be implemented and when and what changes services will need to undertake in preparation, once the National Quality Framework is fully operational by 2012. Children's Services Central recommends all services send at least one representative to the sessions to ensure your service is on top of the latest NQF information. There is one session in each ISA region between now and the end of the year.

To book, go to:

**[www.cscentral.org.au/pd](http://www.cscentral.org.au/pd)**

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Searching for support, resources and professional development?  
Call us on  
**1800 157 818**



## Capturing resources

Do you need help to implement an inspiring, well-researched, well-resourced program, but don't have time to spend online searching through thousands of potential web links?

Children's Services Central can help. The 'Resource Capture' link on our website [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au) may have exactly what you are looking for.

This 'work in progress' will help you to find a range of information, resources and support for your curriculum. We have researched topics such as 'sustainability', 'diversity', and 'creativity' and even included ideas for excursions and performers/activities that will come to you—designed for ages 0–12 in any setting.

As you can imagine, the potential for this list is endless, and that is where we need your help.

If you have used a site that has provided you with information or resources that you thought particularly helpful, we would love to hear from you.

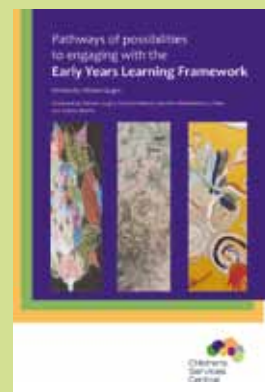
Send an email to us at [info@cscentral.org.au](mailto:info@cscentral.org.au) and include the web address, and we will include this in our 'Resource Capture'.

## Pathways of Possibilities

Children's Services Central has released a new resource for educators within children's services seeking to engage with and implement the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) in their service.

*Pathways of Possibilities to Engaging with the Early Years Learning Framework*, by Miriam Giugni, describes the route that one group of educators took to determining their own pathway of engagement. Through documenting the process of one particular 'curriculum community' and the way the participants of this community (Miriam, Tracey Freeburn, Savithri Madakasira, Su Sher and Sophie Martin) engaged with the EYLF, it presents opportunities for other educators to develop their own ways of engaging, understanding and implementing the EYLF. The publication particularly documents the different ways of engaging with the key themes of the EYLF: Belonging, Being and Becoming.

*Pathways of Possibilities*, as well as other EYLF resources can be downloaded from [www.cscentral.org.au](http://www.cscentral.org.au) (see the 'What's New' tab).



## The new rating system—where will your service fit?

Under the National Quality Agenda (NQA), a new rating system will be introduced with each children's service being rated on the quality of service they provide, based on the National Quality Standard (NQS). Each service will be assessed on their performance across the seven quality areas that make up the new National Quality Standard and given one overall rating. This overall rating is determined by the rating for each of the seven quality areas.

The five levels are:

- **Unsatisfactory:** indicates that a service is not meeting the standard and the regulator is working closely with the service to immediately improve its quality. If there is no improvement the centre will be closed.
- **Operating Level:** indicates that a service is working towards meeting the standard. All new services will commence operation with an Operating Level rating.
- **National Quality Standard:** indicates that a service is meeting the standard.
- **High Quality:** indicates that a service is exceeding the National Quality Standard.
- **Excellent:** indicates that a service demonstrates excellence and is recognised as a leader in the sector. Services will need to apply to be assessed against this rating.