



# Human Services Quality Framework

Measuring quality, improving services

Version 2.0 (1 July 2014)

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## Introduction

The Human Services Quality Framework (the framework) is a quality system for measuring and improving the quality of human services. It applies to organisations delivering services under a service agreement with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (the department) or other specified arrangements<sup>1</sup>.

Central to the framework is a set of standards (Human Services Quality Standards) which define the key elements of delivering human services. These standards include governance and management, service access, responding to individual need, safety wellbeing and rights, feedback, complaints and appeals and human resources.

The framework includes a process for assessing the quality of services delivered to ensure they meet the standards and are continually improved.

The framework was developed in collaboration between the government and non-government sectors to streamline quality standards into a single set of common human service standards. The framework reduces red tape and duplication involved in complying with multiple quality systems, allowing organisations to maintain a focus on quality, while freeing up resources to be redirected to frontline services.

Community benefits from the adoption of the framework include greater consistency in the quality of services delivered and public confidence in service provision.

The framework is being implemented in planned phases through to 2016 across the funding streams of Disability Services, Child Safety, Community Services and Community Care. An exemption applies where an organisation is a corporation and the only consumer of the disability services provided is the director of the organisation.

## Purpose of the framework

The framework's goal is to enable continuous improvement of human services through a streamlined client-focussed approach ranging from self assessment to independent review (audit) against the standards.

Quality assessments help to ensure that organisations comply with the standards and guide them in their service improvements.

## Building blocks

The framework is underpinned by the following building blocks:

- Improving services for customers<sup>2</sup>
- Finding ways to do things better
- Transparency – customers and the public will have confidence about the service
- Sustainability – achieved through an ongoing cycle of review
- Administrative efficiency
- Defining the roles of service providers and government

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<sup>1</sup> The framework also applies to disability services delivered by the department and providers of Child Safety Care Services in-scope of licensing funded through child related costs. Refer to Appendix 1 for the list of in-scope services.

<sup>2</sup> The term "customer" includes the broad range of clients/service users in-scope of the framework

- Customer participation in service improvements.

## Expected benefits

The framework promotes improvements for:

- **Customers, families and carers**
  - Access to better, more reliable services
  - Greater focus on individual needs and their rights
  - Confidence in a service provider's systems and processes
  - Contribute to service improvement
- **Service providers**
  - A clear and consistent framework by which to plan, operate and improve services
  - Reduction in administrative burden and compliance costs
  - A holistic assessment of organisations' systems and processes
  - Positions organisations to deliver services in other areas of human services
- **Government benefits**
  - A streamlined, consistent quality process for all funded organisations
  - Reduction in red tape and redirection of resources to other priorities
  - Increased confidence in government investment in services
  - Improved public accountability.

## Human Services Quality Standards

The Human Services Quality Standards (the standards) set a benchmark for the quality of service provision. Each standard is supported by a set of indicators which detail what an organisation will be assessed against in order to show they meet the standard. The standards and related indicators are outlined on the next page.

More information on examples of evidence, interpretation of the indicators and the expected outcome for each standard is outlined in the [Human Services Quality Framework User Guide](#). This guide is designed to assist organisations to interpret and apply the standards across the different funding streams and includes service-specific information for more complex, specialised services.

The service-specific requirements for Child Safety Care Services in-scope of licensing are detailed in the [Licensing Companion Guide](#).

# Human Services Quality Standards (HSQS)

Standard		Indicator	
<b>1</b>	<b>Governance and Management</b>  Sound governance and management systems that maximise outcomes for stakeholders	1.1	The organisation has accountable and transparent governance arrangements that ensure compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and contractual arrangements.
		1.2	The organisation ensures that members of the governing body possess and maintain the knowledge, skills and experience required to fulfil their roles
		1.3	The organisation develops and implements a vision, purpose statement, values, objectives and strategies for service delivery that reflect contemporary practice.
		1.4	The organisation's management systems are clearly defined, documented and monitored and (where appropriate) communicated including finance, assets and risk.
		1.5	Mechanisms for continuous improvement are demonstrated in organisational management and service delivery processes.
		1.6	The organisation encourages and promotes processes for participation by people using services and other relevant stakeholders in governance and management processes.
		1.7	The organisation has effective information management systems that maintain appropriate controls of privacy and confidentiality for stakeholders.
<b>2</b>	<b>Service Access</b>  Sound eligibility, entry and exit processes facilitate access to services on the basis of relative need and available resources	2.1	Where the organisation has responsibility for eligibility, entry and exit processes, these are consistently applied based on relative need, available resources and the purpose of the service.
		2.2	The organisation has processes to communicate, interact effectively and respond to the individual's decision to access and/or exit services.
		2.3	Where an organisation is unable to provide services to a person, due to ineligibility or lack of capacity, there are processes in place to refer the person to an appropriate alternative service.
<b>3</b>	<b>Responding to Individual Need</b>  The assessed needs of	3.1	The organisation uses flexible and inclusive methods to identify the individual strengths, goals and aspirations of people using services.

	the individual are being appropriately addressed and responded to within resource capacity	3.2	The organisation formulates service delivery that respects and values the individual (e.g. identity, gender, sexuality, culture, age and religious beliefs).
		3.3	The organisation ensures that services to the individual/s are delivered, monitored, reviewed and reassessed in a timely manner.
		3.4	The organisation has partnerships and collaborates to enable it to effectively work with community support networks, other organisations and government agencies as relevant and appropriate.
		3.5	The organisation has a range of strategies to ensure communication and decision-making by the individual is respected and reflected in goals set by the person using services and in plans to achieve service delivery outcomes.
<b>4</b>	<b>Safety, Well Being and Rights</b>  The safety, wellbeing and human and legal rights of people using services are protected and promoted	4.1	The organisation provides services in a manner that upholds people's human and legal rights
		4.2	The organisation proactively prevents, identifies and responds to risks to the safety and wellbeing of people using services.
		4.3	The organisation has processes for reporting and responding to potential or actual harm, abuse and/or neglect that may occur for people using services.
		4.4	People using services are enabled to access appropriate supports and advocacy.
		4.5	The organisation has processes that demonstrate the right of the individual to participate and make choices about the services received.
<b>5</b>	<b>Feedback, Complaints and Appeals</b>  Effective feedback, complaints and appeals processes that lead to improvements in service delivery	5.1	The organisation has fair, accessible and accountable feedback, complaints and appeals processes
		5.2	The organisation effectively communicates feedback, complaints and appeals processes to people using services and other relevant stakeholders
		5.3	People using services and other relevant stakeholders are informed of and enabled to access any external avenues or appropriate supports for feedback, complaints or appeals and assisted to understand how they access them.



		5.4	The organisation demonstrates that feedback, complaints and appeals processes lead to improvements within the service and that outcomes are communicated to relevant stakeholders.
<b>6</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>  Effective human resource management systems, including recruitment, induction and supervisory processes, result in quality service provision.	6.1	The organisation has human resource management systems that are consistent with regulatory requirements, industrial relations legislation, work health and safety legislation and relevant agreements or awards
		6.2	The organisation has transparent and accountable recruitment and selection processes that ensure people working in the organisation possess the knowledge, skills and experience required to fulfil their roles.
		6.3	The organisation provides people working in the organisation with induction, training and development opportunities relevant to their roles.
		6.4	The organisation provides ongoing support, supervision, feedback and fair disciplinary processes for people working in the organisation.
		6.5	The organisation ensures that people working in the organisation have access to fair and effective systems for dealing with grievances and disputes.

## Demonstrating compliance with the standards

To help ensure vulnerable customers are protected and services provided are of a consistent quality, the department requires identified services to be delivered in accordance with the standards. The HSQF uses three categories to define the method for assessing organisations' compliance with the standards. These are:

- In-Scope for Certification
- Self-Assessable
- Evidence of other accreditation or certification.

The applicable level of demonstration will depend on the type and complexity of the services provided, the vulnerability of customers and the level of the department's funding investment.

The table below provides an overview of the requirements for each method of demonstration:

Method of demonstration	Details
<b>In-Scope for Certification</b>	<p><b>When does this method apply?</b> Generally applies to direct service delivery to vulnerable consumers</p> <p><b>What are the requirements?</b> Organisations providing services in this category are required to</p>

<b>Method of demonstration</b>	<b>Details</b>
	<p>achieve and maintain certification against the standards.</p> <p>Organisations will be required to contract an independent JAS-ANZ<sup>3</sup> accredited certification body to assess their suitability for certification. Audits are undertaken at an organisation level across all in-scope services. Audits are conducted in-line with the approved Certification Scheme auditing guidelines (<i>JAS-ANZ HS Scheme Part 1 and HQSF Scheme Part 2</i>) which detail the rules for how audits are conducted and what is included.</p> <p>Audits occur over a three-year certification cycle with a mid-cycle maintenance audit against a sample of the standards.</p> <p><b>Expected outcome</b> Certification indicates that standards are being met and that organisational performance is being enhanced through continuous improvement.</p>
<b>Self-Assessable</b>	<p><b>When does this category apply?</b> Generally applies to non-direct service delivery and/or to universal or low intensity services provided to whole or targeted populations. It may also apply where the department's funding investment is below a set threshold.</p> <p><b>What are the requirements?</b> Organisations providing services in this category are required to undertake a self-assessment (using the department's tool) to rate their performance against the standards and develop a quality improvement plan. Organisations are required to submit their self-assessment report and quality improvement plan to the department for monitoring.</p> <p>Where an organisation holds a current HSQF certificate, this will be accepted as evidence that its self-assessable services meet the standards.</p> <p><b>Expected outcome</b> Self-assessment indicates that standards are being met and identified improvements are being implemented.</p>
<b>Evidence of other accreditation or certification</b>	<p><b>When does this category apply?</b> Applies on a case-by-case basis where an organisation is accredited or certified against an approved industry standard for specific services.</p> <p><b>What are the requirements?</b> This category enables an organisation to use evidence of a current accreditation or certification under an approved quality system to demonstrate that services are being delivered in accordance with the standards.</p>

<sup>3</sup> JAS-ANZ ([Joint Accreditation System of Australia and New Zealand](#)) is the government appointed body for accrediting certification bodies and their audit teams to undertake HSQF audits.



Method of demonstration	Details
	<p>Organisations will be required to provide a copy of their industry standard report and relevant certificate to the department for monitoring.</p> <p><b>Expected outcome</b> Reduces unnecessary duplication for organisations accredited or certified under an approved industry standard and indicates that standards are met and organisational performance is being enhanced through continuous improvement.</p>

Organisations can confirm their compliance demonstration method by reference to *Appendix 1 – Demonstrating compliance with the Human Services Quality Standards*. This document lists the various types of service within each funding stream (Disability, Child Safety, Community Services and Community Care) and the related method for demonstrating compliance with the standards.

There may be a situation where an organisation is not required to demonstrate compliance with the standards for a particular type of service or funding (eg one-off funding or awareness campaign). In this circumstance, the organisation is required to deliver services in accordance with the standards unless otherwise notified.

## Relationship to the Service Agreement

From 1 July 2014, the department is implementing new streamlined service agreements. The quality requirements for funded organisations are set out in the new [Service Agreement – Standard Terms](#) (available on the [Department of Housing and Public Works](#) website) and the [Service Agreement - Funding and Service Details](#). The timeframes for certification and conditions for demonstration of compliance are detailed in the *Service Agreement - Funding and Service Details*. Information on the timeframes for self-assessment and other accreditation or certification against industry standards is detailed in Appendix 1.

The new streamlined agreements are being phased in from 1 July 2014 when:

- existing agreements expire
- funding is approved for new service providers
- existing agreements are varied and the variation is significant, or
- funding ends and there is a new approval for funding.

The department may use audit reports as part of contract management processes and in overall monitoring of compliance and quality.

## Further information

**Contact:** HSQF Team  
Community Sector Partnerships and Reform  
Community Services  
Strategic Policy and Programs  
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services

Telephone (07) 3247 3072 or 1800 034 022

Email : [hsqf@communities.qld.gov.au](mailto:hsqf@communities.qld.gov.au)

**Website:** <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/hsqf>

# Appendix 1 – Demonstrating compliance with the Human Services Quality Standards

**Note: This document is subject to change**

This document supplements information contained in the Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) on the different methods for demonstrating compliance with the Human Services Quality Standards (the standards) for services delivered under a Service Agreement between the department and a funded organisation or other specified arrangement.

The document currently applies to Disability Service providers and Child Safety Care Services in-scope of licensing, as well as providing summary information on the review requirements for Community Care services, which include recognition of independent audits undertaken against the Home Care Standards (Australian Government).

The information provided is grouped by funding stream, service type or output category and the relevant method for demonstrating compliance against the standards.

The document will be updated prior to the end of 2014 to include information relevant to the next phase of implementation of the HSQF across Community Services and Child Safety (non-placement services) funding streams. The department will notify service providers of changes to this document.

Organisations should read the information in conjunction with the HSQF and the Human Services Quality Standards (available at: <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/hsqf>) and their *Service Agreement- Funding and Service Details*.

## Funding stream: Disability Services

The information in this section outlines the method for demonstrating compliance with the standards for Disability Services delivered under a service agreement between the department and a funded organisation.

Services identified as in-scope for certification are required to be externally audited by JAS-ANZ accredited certification bodies against the standards. Audits are conducted at an organisation level across all in-scope services.

*Note: Disability services delivered by the department are also subject to the requirements of the Human Services Quality Framework and are in-scope for certification.*

**Table 1. A In-Scope for Certification**

**Certification Timeframe**  
Refer to Clause 4.3 of the Funding and Service Detail (Disability Services funding)

Funding stream	Output category	Output code (DS NMDS code)	Application
Disability Services	Accommodation Support -	All output codes from 1.01 – 1.083 inclusive	Applies where the output is recurrently funded
Disability Services	Community Support	All output codes from 2.01 – 2.073 inclusive	Applies where the output is recurrently funded
Disability Services	Community Access	All output codes from 3.01 – 3.033 inclusive	Applies where the output is recurrently funded
Disability Services	Respite	All output codes from 4.01 – 4.052 inclusive	Applies where the output is recurrently funded
Disability Services	Advocacy, information and alternative forms of communication	All output codes from 6.01 – 6.05 inclusive	Applies where the output is recurrently funded and includes <u>direct customer</u> service delivery
Disability Services	Other Support	All output codes from 7.01– 7.04 inclusive	Applies where the output is recurrently funded and includes <u>direct customer</u> service delivery

Funding stream	Output category	Output code (DS NMDS code)	Application
Disability Services	Family Support Program Discretionary funding – service delivery	50.01	Applies where the output is recurrently funded

**Table 1 B Self-Assessable – not currently applicable**

<i>Self –Assessment Timeframe</i> <i>Not currently applicable</i>
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Funding stream	Output category	Output code (DS NMDS code)	Application
Disability Services			

**Table 1 C Evidence of other relevant current accreditation or certification**

Funding stream	Output category/ Output code (DS NMDS code)	Relevant current accreditation or certification and timeframe for demonstration	Application
Disability Services	Advocacy, information and alternative forms of communication and other support (6.01- 7.03 inclusive)	ISO 9001:2008 (three year certification cycle with annual audits)	Applies where an organisation is recurrently funded only for outputs detailed in this table, with <u>no direct service delivery</u> to service users

**Table 1 D No demonstration of compliance required\***

\*Note: all services must be delivered in compliance with the quality standards even where no demonstration of compliance is required (see clause 4.3 Service Agreement- Funding and Service Details)

Funding stream	Output Category	Output code (DS NMDS code)	Application
Disability Services	Accommodation Support -	All output codes from 1.01 – 1.083 inclusive	No demonstration of compliance is required where an organisation receives <u>one-off funding</u> against this output code
Disability Services	Community Support	All output codes from 2.01 – 2.073 inclusive	No demonstration of compliance is required where an organisation receives <u>one-off</u>

Funding stream	Output Category	Output code (DS NMDS code)	Application
			<u>funding</u> against this output code
Disability Services	Community Access	All output codes from 3.01 – 3.033 inclusive	No demonstration of compliance is required where an organisation receives <u>one-off funding</u> against this output code
Disability Services	Respite	All output codes from 4.01– 4.052 inclusive	No demonstration of compliance is required where an organisation receives <u>one-off funding</u> against this output code
Disability Services	Advocacy, Information and alternative forms of communication	All output codes from 6.01 – 6.05 inclusive	No demonstration of compliance is required where an organisation receives <u>one-off funding</u> against this output code
Disability Services	Other Support	7.04	No demonstration of compliance is required against this output code where there is no direct service delivery to service users or where there is provision of one-off funding for a defined event or for the purchase of aids and equipment
Disability Services	Family Support Program Discretionary funding – service delivery	50.01	No demonstration of compliance is required where an organisation receives <u>one-off funding</u> against this output code
Disability Services	Family Support Program Discretionary funding – non service delivery	50.02	No demonstration of compliance is required against this output code

## Funding Stream: Child Safety

The information in this section outlines the method for demonstrating compliance with the standards for Child Safety Care Services in-scope of licensing (including services funded as child related costs).

The tables below and the relevant methods for demonstrating compliance with the standards will be updated, prior to the end of 2014, to include the requirements of the full range of services funded under the Child Safety funding stream. Organisations delivering child safety services will transition to the HSQF over time and will be negotiated in accordance with requirements of their *Service Agreement - Funding and Service Details*.

**Table 2.A In-scope for certification**

<b>Certification Timeframe</b> <i>Not currently applicable</i>
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Funding stream	Service model	Service type	Application
Child Safety	Family based care	Foster and Kinship care	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Family based care	Foster and Kinship care with Direct Care	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Family based care	Intensive Foster care	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Family based care	Intensive Foster care with Direct care	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Non family based care	Residential Care	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Non family based care	Therapeutic Residential Care	Applies to all care services in-scope



Funding stream	Service model	Service type	Application
			of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Non family based care	Indigenous Safe House	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)
Child Safety	Non family based care	Supported independent living	Applies to all care services in-scope of licensing (including defined term funding and child related costs)

**Table 2.B Self-Assessable – not currently applicable**

<b>Self-assessment timeframe</b> <i>Not currently applicable</i>
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Funding Stream	Service type	Inclusions
Child Safety		

**Table 2.C Evidence of other relevant current accreditation or certification – not currently applicable**

Funding stream	Service type	Relevant current accreditation or certification and timeframe for demonstration	Application
Child Safety			

## Funding stream: Community Services

Organisations delivering services funded under the Community Services funding stream will transition to the HSQF over time and will be negotiated in accordance with the requirements of their *Service Agreement- Funding and Service Details*.

The below tables and the relevant methods for demonstrating compliance with the standards will be updated, prior to the end of 2014, to include requirements of the full range of services funded under the Community Services funding stream.

**Table 4.A In-scope for certification – not currently applicable**

<b>Certification Timeframe</b> <i>Not currently applicable</i>
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Funding stream	Service type	Application
Community Services		

**Table 4.B Self-Assessable – not currently applicable**

<b>Self-assessment timeframe</b> <i>Not currently applicable</i>
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Funding stream	Service type	Application
Community Services		

**Table 4.C Evidence of other relevant current accreditation or certification – not currently applicable**

Funding stream	Service type	Relevant current accreditation or certification and timeframe for demonstration	Application
Community Services			

## Funding stream: Community Care

As specified in the *Service Agreement- Funding and Service Details*, Community Care service providers must comply with the standards and participate in an independent quality review. The following review processes may apply:

- reviews undertaken by an independent auditing body appointed by the department to assess compliance with the standards (review will be conducted at least once in every three years)
- evidence of a review undertaken by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards (Australian Government).

To reduce red tape and duplication for providers that deliver both disability services and community care, the department will, as a general rule, accept the disability services audit and HSQF certification as meeting Community Care's quality review requirements.

For individual arrangements, please contact the Community Care Contract Management team on (07) 3109 7003 or email:

[communitycare-admin@communities.qld.gov.au](mailto:communitycare-admin@communities.qld.gov.au)

Funding stream	Service type	Outputs	Review process
Community Care	Service type 1 - Home Care Services	Domestic assistance/personal care/social support/respite care/other food services	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 2 - Coordinated Care	Assessment/client care coordination/case management/counselling/support, information and advocacy	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 3 - Clinical and Specialist Care	Nursing care/Allied health care (received at home or centre)	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 4 - Centre Based Day Care		Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by

Funding stream	Service type	Outputs	Review process
			the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 5 - Home Modification	Home modification/goods and equipment/home maintenance	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 6 - Meals	Meals received at home, centre or other	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 7 - Transport	Transport	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards
Community Care	Service type 8 - Information and Education	Information and Education (Statewide)	Review against the standards by an independent auditing body appointed by the department <u>or</u> evidence of a review by an independent auditing body against the Home Care Standards