



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality

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Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality **Element 1 – Child Observation**

To obtain 1 point:

Not Required – Child Observation and Assessment is not required at 1 point level.

To obtain 2 points:

Program uses evidence-based child assessment/observation tool once a year that covers all five domains of development.

“Uses” refers to any assessment, instrument, or tool that yields individual and group information. This term requires that the program accesses and analyzes results and those results (whether individual information or aggregated group data) are used to inform practice.

Examples of evidence-based tools: High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for Infants and Toddlers; High/Scope Preschool Child Observation Record (COR), 2nd Edition; Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 3; Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 4; Learning Accomplishment Profile 3rd Edition (preschool); The Ounce Scale (infant/toddler); NIEER Early Learning Scale.

Five domains of development: physical (gross and fine motor), social-emotional, cognitive, and communication.

To obtain 3 points:

Program uses valid and reliable child assessment/observation tool aligned with California Foundations and Frameworks, twice per year

Valid and reliable tools are those approved by the California Department of Education. Currently approved tools are: Teaching Strategies GOLD® (Creative Curriculum) assessment; Early Learning Scale by National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER); Brigance Inventory of Early Development III.

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To obtain 4 points:

Program uses DRDP 2015 (minimum twice per year) and results are used to inform curriculum planning

Sites may choose, at their discretion, to use the comprehensive, fundamental, or essential view of the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) 2015.

Evidence should demonstrate that individual child assessments are considered when planning for learning experiences through which the curriculum goals will be achieved.

Acceptable documentation is as follows:

1. *Show use of DRDP and program has current NAEYC Accreditation **OR***
2. *Show use of DRDP and provide current Head Start School Readiness Goals **OR***
3. *Provide completed CD 4001B (Desired Results Developmental Profile Summary of Finding for the Classroom and Family Child Care Home Form) **OR***
4. *Provide two of the following as evidence:*
 - a. *Written curriculum statements*
 - b. *Lesson plans*
 - c. *Planning webs*
 - d. *Notes from planning sessions with information on how a purchased curriculum (if used) considers assessment of child progress*

To obtain 5 points:

Program uses DRDP 2015 twice a year and uploads into DRDP Online, and results are used to inform curriculum.

Use of DRDP Online is free to Head Start, state funded programs, and all RQT participating sites.

Twice-annual assessments are confirmed in the same manner as for four points above.

Evidence should demonstrate the use of domain scale reports when planning for individual and group learning experiences within the curriculum. Desired Results Access domain-level reports can be used for children with IFSPs and IEPs.



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality **Element 2 – Developmental and Health Screenings**

To obtain 1 point:

Not Required – Meets Title 22 Regulations.

Title 22 Regulations require current immunization records for every child enrolled in the family child care home or center. Family child care homes use form [PM 286](#) (“blue card”) and centers use form [LIC 701](#).

To obtain 2 points:

Health Screening Form (Community Care Licensing form LIC 701 “Physician’s Report – Child Care Centers” or equivalent) used at entry, then:

- 1. Annually OR**
- 2. Ensures vision and hearing screenings annually**

Used at entry then annually: Requires the program to collect form LIC 701 (or equivalent) at the child’s entry into the program and annually or at the beginning of each program year.

Conducts (or collects) screening: If vision and hearing screening are used as the method of meeting this standard, programs may:

- Use information from a doctor’s or specialist’s screening*
- Conduct vision and health screenings at the site*
- Use information from a doctor/specialist and conduct vision and health screening at the site.*

In instances where the site has difficulty meeting the annual requirements for one or more returning children (after collection of Health Screening Form LIC 701 upon entry), monitors may accept one or both of the following forms of evidence of health screening during subsequent years of a child’s attendance:

- Parent “opt-out” form or equivalent evidence that parent denied resubmittal of Health Screening Form and/or denied screening*
- Detailed documentation of repeated attempts to obtain Health Screening Form and/or parent consent when conducting file review*

To obtain 3 points:

Program works with families to screen all children using a valid and reliable child screening tool at entry, annually*, and as indicated by results thereafter AND Meets criteria for Point Value 2

Partial List of valid & reliable screening tools: Mullen Scales of Early Learning; DIAL 3; Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ); ESP: Early Screening Profiles; ESI-R (Early Screening Inventory); Denver II; Parents Evaluation of Developmental Status; Parents Evaluation of



Developmental Status – Developmental Milestones; Battelle Developmental Inventory Screening Test; Learning Accomplishment Profile-Diagnostic Screens.

“As indicated by the results thereafter,” refers to the actions taken by the program to refer families to additional resources based on the results of the screening tool.

Beginning at this point value, both centers and family child care homes must use a developmental screening tool or produce proof of one of the items below:

- *IFSP/IEP*
- *Evidence of screening in another venue (must have actual screen or documented results)*
- *Parent “opt-out” form or equivalent evidence that parent denied screening*
- *Detailed documentation of repeated attempts to obtain parental consent when conducting file review.*

In addition to providing evidence through the file review process that 100 percent of children are screened, the site must provide evidence for how the screening and referral process works at the site level.

To obtain 4 points:

Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the ASQ at entry, annually*, and as indicated by results thereafter AND Meets criteria from Point Value 2

“Program works with families” means:

- *Families are engaged in the screening process*
- *Results are shared with the family in a confidential and supportive manner*
- *Program staff use screening results to refer families to the appropriate agencies for further assessment, such as Help Me Grow, Alta Regional Center, school district, and/or other resources.*

To obtain 5 points:

Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the ASQ & ASQ:SE, if indicated, at entry, annually*, then as indicated by results thereafter AND**

Program staff use children’s screening results to make referrals, implement intervention strategies, and adaptations as appropriate AND

Meets criteria for Point Value 2

** Annual administration of a developmental screening tool is a local decision by the RQT Consortium.*

*** “if indicated” is a local decision acting in the best interest of the child; annual administration of both ASQ & ASQ:SE to achieve Point Value 5 is a local decision by the RQT Consortium.*



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality
Element 3 – Early Childhood Educator Qualifications: Minimum Qualifications for Lead Teacher/Family Child Care Home (FCCH)

To obtain 1 point:

Meets Title 22 Regulations

To obtain 2 points:

Center: 24 units of ECE/CD (core 8 desired, not required)

FCCH: 12 units of ECE/CD (core 8 desired, not required)

OR

Associate Teacher Permit

In Point Values 2 through 5, educational qualifications are entered into the workforce registry for all lead teachers employed at the site AND no less than 75 percent of them must meet requirements in Point Values 2 through 5. All higher education units are calculated by semester units (quarter units are converted to semester units).

Total # of Lead Teachers	# Needed to Meet Requirement
2	2
3	3
4	3
5	4
6	5
7	6
8	6
9	7
10	8

In Point Values 3 through 5, staff in family child care homes (FCCH) and centers are held to the same educational standard.

Point Value 2 is equivalent to the Associate Teacher Permit for family child care homes and centers. Teachers who applied for the permit may substitute verification of application, in lieu of the transcript, for review.

An expired permit can meet the requirements for Point Values 2 through 5 as long as the qualifications are consistent with current permit requirements.



The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) Child Development Permit Matrix can be found at the following link:

[https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/child-development-permits-\(cl-797\)](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/child-development-permits-(cl-797)).

For questions regarding Montessori certifications and their equivalent, see Title 22 licensing section 101216.1.

For obtaining translations and determining the status of foreign educational institutions, contact the International Education Research Foundation, Credentials Evaluation Service, www.ierf.org. Additional organizations approved by CTC for transcript evaluation can be found at [https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/foreign-transcript-evaluation-\(cl-635\)](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/leaflets/foreign-transcript-evaluation-(cl-635)).

Each group of children must have at least one designated lead teacher. The lead teacher must spend the vast majority of time with one group of children who attend the same time rather than divide time between classrooms or float among groups. The group size is determined by the point value of the rating. The above is based on the NAEYC accreditation definition of a teacher.

For the purposes of rating a licensed FCCH, the lead teacher is defined as the adult who is the owner and full-time operator of the FCCH. If the owner is not teaching the children, the FCCH lead teacher is defined as the adult with the highest degree who spends the vast majority of time with the children. A group of children in an FCCH is defined as those children who are enrolled in the FCCH. The group size is determined by licensing requirements based on the ages of the children enrolled.

To obtain 3 points:

24 units of ECE/CD and 16 units of General Education

OR

Teacher Permit

AND

21 hours professional learning (PL)* annually

Point Value 3 is equivalent to the Teacher Permit.

**Professional learning = training. Documentation of PL can be the teacher's workforce registry Education and Training Report or certificates of completion that show at minimum the training agency name, training title, date of training, number of training hours, and name of attendee. This is a local decision.*

"Annually" in regard to PL is a 12-month period and can be calculated from the point of enrollment in RQT or from the date of last validation.



To obtain 4 points:

Associate's degree (AA/AS) in ECE/CD or closely related field

OR

AA/AS in any field plus/with 24 units of ECE/CD

OR

Site Supervisor Permit

AND

21 hours PL annually.

Point Value 4 is equivalent to the Site Supervisor Permit.

For Point Values 4 and 5, a BA degree in a closely related field, such as Education or Human Development, may be counted as a related field IF a substantial amount of the coursework was focused on young children ages 0 to 5. "Substantial" is calculated by the workforce registry and is aligned with the California Commission Teacher Credentialing's approach.

To obtain 5 points:

Bachelor's degree in ECE/CD

OR

BA/BS in any field plus/with 24 units of ECE/CD that conform to permit requirements

OR

Master's degree in ECE/CD

OR

Program Director Permit

AND

21 hours PL annually.

Point Value 5 is equivalent to the Program Director Permit.



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality

Element 4 – Effective Teacher-Child Interactions: CLASS® Observations

To obtain 1 point:

Not applicable.

To obtain 2 points:

Familiarity with CLASS (e.g., having attended overview orientations, webinars, trainings, college courses in which the tool is presented, and/or other forms of knowing the intent, purpose, and use of the tool) for appropriate age group as available by one representative from the site.

To obtain 3 points:

Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer (using the appropriate tool) to inform the program’s professional development/quality improvement plan*.

OR

Informal assessment and results used to inform Quality Improvement Plan and staff professional development plan.**

**While results of the independent CLASS observation will be used to inform the site’s Quality Improvement Plan, evidence of having a Quality Improvement Plan in place is not a requirement for a point value of three.*

For an independent assessment CLASS reliability must be renewed annually and is available for the Infant, Toddler, and Pre-K CLASS tools. A reliable CLASS observer should be able to provide a certificate indicating current reliability (issued within the previous 12 months).

***If choosing to use an informal assessment, the information from those assessment results must be evident in the program Quality Improvement Plan and staff professional development plan.*

An informal assessment may include an external assessment, self-assessment, or other methods determined locally to enable teachers/sites to review adult-child interactions and set goals for improvement.

In classrooms or family child care home with multiple age groups, the age tool appropriate for the highest number of children will be used to assess.



To obtain 4 points:

Independent CLASS observation by reliable observer (using the appropriate tool) with minimum CLASS domain scores:

PreK

- **Emotional Support Domain (ES) – 5**
- **Classroom Organization Domain (CO) – 5**
- **Instructional Support Domain (IS) – 3**

Toddler

- **Emotional & Behavioral Support Domain (EBS) – 5**
- **Engaged Support for Learning Domain (ESL) – 3.5**

Infant

Responsive Caregiving Domain (RC) – 5

To obtain 5 points:

Independent assessment with CLASS (for appropriate age group as available) with minimum CLASS domain scores:

PreK

- **Emotional Support Domain (ES) – 5.5**
- **Classroom Organization Domain (CO) – 5.5**
- **Instructional Support Domain (IS) – 3.5**

Toddler

- **Emotional & Behavioral Support Domain (EBS) – 5.5**
- **Engaged Support for Learning Domain (ESL) – 4**

Infant

Responsive Caregiving Domain (RC) – 5.5

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For Point Values 4 & 5

Each classroom rated will receive an individual point value based on the tool used and the domain cutoff scores. Average all classroom points and drop the decimal to obtain the final site points on this element.

Example:

Classroom	Domain Score	Domain Score	Domain Score	Points for Element
PreK Alligators	ES 5.42	CO 5.89	IS 3.13	4
PreK Bears	ES 5.10	CO 5.68	IS 2.95	3
Toddler Dragonfly	EBS 5.15	ESL 3.32		3
Infant Ladybugs	RC 5.11			4

1. Total the points earned by classroom
 $4 + 3 + 3 + 4 = 14$
2. Divide the number of classrooms observed = 4
3. Obtain average points for observed classrooms
 $14 \div 4 = 3.5$
4. Drop the decimal to determine final point value for the site for this element
5. Site points for Element 4 (Teacher-Child Interactions) = 3



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality **Element 5 – Ratios and Group Size (Centers Only)**

To obtain 1 point:

Title 22 Regulations for Centers

Infant Ratio of 1:4

Toddler Option Ratio of 1:6

Preschool Ratio of 1:12

To obtain 2 points:

Infant/Toddler Ratio of 4:16

Toddler Ratio of 3:18

Preschool Ratio of 3:36

To obtain 3 points:

Infant/Toddler Ratio of 3:12

Toddler Ratio of 2:12

Preschool Ratio of 2:24

To obtain 4 points:

Infant/Toddler Ratio of 3:12 or 2:8

Toddler Ratio of 2:10

Preschool Ratio of 3:24 or 2:20

To obtain 5 points:

Infant Ratio of 3:9 or better

Toddler Ratio of 3:12 or better

Preschool Ratio of 1:8 and group size of no more than 20

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“Ratios” are defined as the number of staff in relation to the number of children at any given time of the day.

“Group size” is defined as the largest number of children allowed in a given space at any given time.

“Staff” is defined as employed adults that may be counted “in ratio” with children at any given time. This may be one full-time, full-day staff member, or one full-time, full-day staff member and one or more part-day staff members. This may not include staff that “float” to provide breaks, parent volunteers, or other visiting adults. Volunteers may not be used in ratio and group size calculations. Title 22 regulations require that adult:child ratios include only employed adults.

“Classroom” is defined as a space where teaching staff are the same throughout the day or materials used are the same for one or more groups throughout the day.

Ages:group size

- Infant – A child aged birth to 18 months*
- Toddler – A child who is 18 to 36 months of age*

Based on Education Code Section 8265.5

- Preschooler – A child who is three years of age to kindergarten entry. The child’s third birthday must be on or before September 1.*

Ratios

Ratios and group size are verified through in-person visit.

Ratio and group size scores will be reported as follows:

As with the Element 4 CLASS rating, individual point values for each classroom will be determined for the ratio/group size element based on the Rating Matrix. Each classroom’s rating is averaged for the site rating. The decimal is dropped and the whole number will be reported as the points for this element.

Example:

- Infant Room point value of 4*
- Toddler Room point valued of 3*
- Preschool Room A point valued of 2*
- Preschool Room B point valued of 3*
- Preschool Room C point valued of 2*

$$4 + 3 + 2 + 3 + 2 = 14$$

$$14 \div 5 = 2.8$$

Overall points for ration/group size = 2



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality **Element 6 – Environment**

To obtain 1 point:

Knowledge or use of Environment Rating Scale (ERS) not Required

To obtain 2 points:

Familiarity with Environment Rating Scale-R (ERS) and every classroom uses ERS as a part of a Quality Improvement Plan

Familiarity with ERS may include: having attended overview orientations, webinars, training, college courses in which the tool was presented, and/or other forms of knowing the intent, purpose, and use of the tool, but not to the depth of completing assessments or observations.

Using ERS as part of a Quality Improvement Plan (identify components of the ERS scale to be improved in the site's QIP; for example, modifying schedule to meet Substantial Portion of the Day).

To obtain 3 points:

ERS assessment on the whole tool for appropriate age group(s). Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan.

The ERS assessment may be an external assessment or self-assessment using the expanded scoresheet for appropriate classroom setting and age group, and results are used to inform the program's QIP, using the [RQT ERS Action Plan form](#) or the Environment Rating Scales – Summary of Findings form from CDE/CDSS. *ERS books available from RQT Mentor. ERS Scoresheets links: [ITERS](#) [ECERS](#) [FCCERS](#)*

To obtain 4 points:

ERS assessment on the whole tool for appropriate age group(s). Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan and staff professional development plan.

The ERS assessment may be an external assessment or self-assessment using the expanded scoresheet for appropriate classroom setting and age group, and results are used to inform the program's QIP, using the [RQT ERS Action Plan form](#) or the Environment Rating Scales – Summary of Findings form from CDE/CDSS. The results are also used to inform the program's staff professional development plan. *ERS books available from RQT Mentor. ERS Scoresheets links: [ITERS](#) [ECERS](#) [FCCERS](#)*

To obtain 5 points:

Current National Accreditation approved by the California Department of Education.

Currently "National Accreditation" refers to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Other national accreditation must be approved by the California Department of Education prior to awarding the site five points for this element.



Element Guidelines for Maintaining or Improving Quality **Element 7 – Director Qualifications (Centers Only)**

To obtain 1 point:

12 units of core ECE/CD (early childhood education, child development, family/consumer studies, or related field), plus 3 units in management/administration

To obtain 2 points:

24 units of core ECE/CD, plus 16 units of General Education, plus 3 units of management/administration

OR

Master Teacher Permit

In Point Values 2 through 5, educational qualifications are entered into the workforce registry for all administrators employed at the site. All higher education units are calculated by semester units (quarter units are converted to semester units).

To obtain 3 points:

Associate's degree with 24 units of core ECE/CD, plus 6 units of management/administration plus 2 units of supervision

OR

Site Supervisor Permit

AND

21 hours professional learning* (PL) annually

**Professional learning = training. Documentation of PL can be the administrator's workforce registry Education and Training Report or certificates of completion that show at minimum the training agency name, training title, date of training, number of training hours, and name of attendee. This is a local decision.*

"Annually" in regard to PL is a 12-month period and can be calculated from the point of enrollment in RQT or from the date of last validation.

To obtain 4 points:

Bachelor's degree with 24 units of core ECE/CD, plus 8 units of management/administration

OR

Program Director Permit

AND

21 hours professional learning (PL) annually



To obtain 5 points:

Master’s degree with 30 units core ECE/CD including specialized courses, 8 units of management/administration

OR

Administrative Credential

AND

21 hours professional learning (PL) annually

Center director is responsible for:

- *Scheduling staff in accordance with licensing requirements and site needs*
- *Managing of all aspects of employee relations including performance review and training*
- *Meeting all licensing regulations, agency policies and procedures and the Education Code as applicable*
- *Accurate update of records on site including but not limited to enrollment, attendance, meal counts, daily logs, curriculum, child observations, and parent participation*
- *The Designee for ensuring implementation of requirements of funding, including assessment, screening, curriculum, etc.*
- *The legal Designee to send and/or receive legal documents (i.e., restraining orders, suspected child abuse reports, unusual incident reports, etc.)*

A director who is responsible for two or more sites may serve as the “program director” of all of the site locations provided that a person meeting qualifications at Point Value 1 is employed for each individual site/location. In this instance, both the “program director” and a designated lead teacher will meet the educational qualifications of center director. Based on the California Code of Regulations, Title 22 sections 101215 and 101215.1 For example, state preschools located on the grounds of elementary school may have a “program director” of all the state preschool locations; however, at least one teaching staff person of a state preschool on each site must meet the educational qualifications of “center director.”

Note for clarification: Due to changes in course offerings of administration/management and supervision in colleges in California, if a course includes content in both administration/management AND supervision in ECE/CD, the two semester units will be met for three points.