Introduction

This guide is designed to assist you in understanding and completing the Early Childhood Validation process at Exemplary Level 3.

What is the validation process?

After you submit your application it will be assessed by a validator, who will review the information provided and determine if you have met each of the Standards at the required level as outlined in the EBAs.

If you do not meet one or more of the Standards, the validator will provide specific feedback and you will be asked to resubmit the information (you will be given extra time to do this). Once this additional information has been assessed by the validator, their recommendation will be provided to your employer.

If the validator and your employer provide unanimous recommendations, the process is complete and both you and your employer will be advised of the outcome and effective date in writing. If the recommendations are not unanimous, we will arrange for a second validator to conduct a site visit to determine if the outstanding requirements have been met.

What standards will I be assessed against?

Your application will be assessed against eight standards, aligned to three domains as follows:

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Each standard has a definition and the wording contained in the definition needs to be carefully considered when developing your response. The specific wording of each standard should guide the quality and content of your response. If there are dual or multiple aspects to a standard, it is expected you will be able to demonstrate how you meet each of these aspects, rather than only one of them.
How do I select and prepare my evidence?

You need to gather evidence which shows you can do the work described in each of the standard definitions, at the required level to satisfy the professional standards of the Level 3 classification. Each piece of evidence consists of two parts:

- an example of your work from your professional practice
- an accompanying explanation, describing how your evidence meets the requirements for the relevant standard

Together, the evidence and the explanation should demonstrate how you have met the criteria of each standard. Detailed information about the standards and their definitions can be found on pages 4-9.

You should provide no more than two pieces of evidence for each standard. However, a single piece of evidence may be used for more than one standard. Your evidence items may be up to 5 years old. There are many different types of evidence you can provide to demonstrate how you meet the standards - suggested types of evidence are included in the detailed information for each standard on pages 4-9.

Once you have determined the evidence item/s you wish to submit for each standard, you will need to complete an Evidence Information Sheet for each item. In the section titled Explain how your evidence meet the requirements of the standard, you should provide a thorough and specific explanation about how each aspect of work related to the evidence demonstrates the requirements of the standard. For more information in relation to completing the evidence information sheets, please refer to the ‘Examples of Evidence Descriptions’ document, available from the VETASSESS website.

In the Validation process, the explanation you provide is as important as the item of evidence in demonstrating how you meet the criteria of each standard. Your descriptions also demonstrate your written communication skills.

Tips for completing your application

» Consider the specific wording of each standard – each of these words should be considered when writing the explanation of how your evidence relates to the standard.

» The evidence must clearly show examples of your work. Documents produced by another author (including training documents and reports by support staff from other agencies) are limited in showing your actual knowledge or practice. If using evidence such as this, your role must be very clearly stated and documented in your response.

» Attendance at training sessions alone does not confirm you have acquired knowledge – this is demonstrated by evidence you have applied the relevant knowledge in your practice.

» The evidence you submit must not compromise the legal or ethical rights of children, families or colleagues. Review your evidence and delete specific reference to individuals and/or groups that might compromise their legal or ethical rights (you may use whiteout, stickers etc. to cover names if necessary).

» Your evidence should principally be drawn from examples of your recent or prior practice, rather than creating new evidence for your application (NB: evidence items may be up to 5 years old)

» Blank templates or pro-formas are not considered strong forms of evidence.

» Provide a clear, thorough explanation about how your evidence item demonstrates the requirements of the standard(s) as per the definition.

» Ensure that references from colleagues, employers, parent groups or community groups describe the work that you have done and your professional experience relating to the standard that you are addressing.

» Link items of evidence that support each other, such as workbooks and course outlines.

» If you are using one item of evidence for more than one standard, you do not need to provide multiple copies of the evidence. Just remember to refer to the same Evidence Item number in your descriptions.

» In your explanation, refer to the relevant piece of evidence to build a picture of your competence.

» Be selective and use the pieces of evidence that best meet the relevant standard(s).
How do I submit my application?

Once you have selected your evidence items and are ready to compile your application you can do this by:

» Submitting an application via the VETASSESS website, where you will be able to complete the explanations and upload your evidence items online (NB: each upload document can be a maximum of 2MB).

» Downloading the application form from the VETASSESS website, completing the details and scanning both your evidence items and explanations to a USB, and posting or hand delivering the USB to VETASSESS.

» Downloading the application form from the website, completing the details and attaching copies of your evidence items, and posting or hand delivering hard copies to VETASSESS.

Whichever way you choose to complete your application, you will need to complete the following details on each of the evidence information sheets:

» **Your name and application file number:** this number will be created once you have completed the Notice of Intent to Apply information on-line, or you will be advised by email if you have provided a hard copy of the form.

» **Evidence Item number:** e.g. for standard 8 you may call the evidence 8.1 or 8A. If you use the same piece of evidence for another standard, you do not need to attach additional copies of the evidence. Just refer to the relevant evidence item number.

» **Type of Evidence:** this should be a brief description of the evidence (e.g. ‘assorted styles of planning and curriculum approaches’, ‘copy of presentation to parents’ etc.).

» **Explanation of how your evidence meets the requirements of the standard:** this is the section where you should provide a full explanation of how your evidence meets the requirements of the relevant standard. There is no limit to the length of this explanation and you can add additional pages if required.
PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The Professional Knowledge Standards relate to your knowledge and your capacity to articulate this knowledge and how it impacts your practice. If you choose examples of your practice as evidence for these standards, it is critical you are able to clearly articulate your underpinning knowledge and therefore link the evidence satisfactorily to the standard.

Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 8

Standard Definition:  Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of exemplary practice in relevant curriculum approaches and areas.

This may be demonstrated by:

- Using your knowledge to reflect on the program being taught and identifying how to adapt and refine your practice in light of this reflection.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Presentations to colleagues on curriculum change and/or innovation
- Record of in-service days that focus on teaching practice and curriculum and the results of discussions and proposals
- Examples of your reflection on teaching practice and notation of the changes resulting from that reflection
- Examples of advice provided to a trainee early childhood teacher on exemplary practice
- Your reports on curriculum approaches and practices
- Information you have provided to parents, committees or community groups relating to current program and planned changes to program; this could include newsletters and reports

Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 9

Standard Definition:  Demonstrate a high level of knowledge of current teaching, learning and assessment theories.

This may be demonstrated by:

- Articulating and discussing actual and emerging trends in the theoretical underpinnings of current learning and assessment theories, and how this relates to your practice, to demonstrate a high level of knowledge.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Reports or case studies of professional inquiries, e.g. action research projects that link your knowledge, current theory and professional practice
- Projects, dissertations or theses related to teaching and learning
- Transcripts of presentations given by you at conferences, area teacher meetings etc. describing current trends in theories of teaching, learning and assessment, with recommendations for professional practice
- Transcripts of course results in higher degree programs related to teaching, learning, curriculum and/or assessment
- Reports and information you provide to parents regarding teaching and learning, including new programs and new trends in program design
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The Professional Practice Standards relate to your actual practice skills and your capacity to articulate the many components of the teaching process, and how you apply the teaching strategies, assessment and evaluation practices you use, and also how you review and refine these practices.

Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 20

Standard Definition: **Demonstrate and model** exemplary practice in their teaching and learning skills.

This may be demonstrated by:

- Use of your knowledge is reflected in your curriculum
- You implementing consistent and highly effective program plans, which evidence sequences of extended learning relevant to children's' individual needs.
- You consistently adapting your range of strategies to provide the opportunity for each child to learn and experience success.
- Showing you consistently plan and provide for different learning styles and interests.
- Showing you provide programs which are responsive to emerging needs, and which are adaptable to unexpected needs.
- How you apply the knowledge of the particular life experiences and knowledge of children from diverse backgrounds, and consistently provide an inclusive program that responds to emerging understandings.
- Consistently seek out new ways to facilitate learning and development through access to a range of resources including technology.
- Showing how you initiate the development of teaching resources.
- Providing an understanding of family systems, how these influence a child's development and the learning opportunities that exist within a child's everyday activities and experiences.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Examples of program plans that incorporate teaching and learning strategies to meet the needs of a range of children's learning styles and interests
- Conference programs and meeting notes
- Article/s in network newsletter about you and a specific program
- Notes on the types of assistance/feedback provided to preservice teachers
- Invitations for other professionals to visit the program and their responses
- Philosophy statement highlighting exemplary practice
Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 21

Standard Definition: *Demonstrate expertise and refined approaches in all aspects of assessment and evaluation practices*

This may be demonstrated by:

- Showing how you develop and regularly adapt assessment and evaluation tools.
- Showing you have a comprehensive understanding of an integrated approach to planning which recognises the emergent strengths and interests of children.
- Involve children in assessment of, and planning for, their own learning.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Conference programs that focus on assessment and evaluation
- Program notes relating to assessment and evaluation
- Statements of Centre organisation and philosophy, and evaluation of goals and objectives
- Collegial references relating to assessment and evaluation practices
- Annotation of children's work explaining the input of the child, e.g. individual child's program, sample of a child's work over a period of time

Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 22

Standard Definition: *Demonstrate a wide range of teaching strategies and assessment methods that support children's learning*

This may be demonstrated by:

- Showing how you use a full range of teaching strategies and approaches to engage children in learning.
- Demonstrating a fully integrated cycle of teaching, learning and assessment which is documented and easily conveyed.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Examples of assessment tools and how they have been utilised
- Journal of arrangements regarding diverse families, including assessment and resultant actions
- Examples of documentation illustrating a range of strategies and teaching and learning programs designed to meet the requirements of a diversity of children's needs
Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 23

Standard Definition:  Teachers *consistently adapt* the *teaching processes* and *learning strategies* in recognition of recent research findings and action research

This may be demonstrated by:

- Continually reflecting on and adapting your teaching approaches and strategies to support and enhance children's learning.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Journal/program notes demonstrating how new knowledge underpins current practice or has influenced a change of practice
- Notes of recent reading
- Professional projects, dissertations or theses related to teaching and learning, submitted to meet higher degree requirements
- Reports or case studies of professional inquiries, e.g. action research projects that link teacher knowledge and current theory
- Transcripts of course results in higher degree programs related to teaching, learning, curriculum and/or assessment
- Examples of previous curriculum programs annotated to illustrate adaptive approaches to planning over time
PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT and COMMITMENT

The Professional Engagement and Commitment Standards relate to you being able to demonstrate a strong commitment to ongoing professional learning over a period of years, and to demonstrating your leadership to those within your service and also more broadly within the wider community at an exemplary level.

Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 33
Standard Definition: Demonstrate a strong commitment to ongoing professional learning.

This may be demonstrated by:

- Taking responsibility for your on-going professional development, including the development of a structured program of sustainable professional development, and demonstrating outcomes, which improve your teaching and learning.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Minutes of meetings of professional learning networks recording the contribution to your professional learning
- Posters, flyers, email newsletters or other evidence of attendance at professional learning activities (e.g. 5 or more Certificates of Attendance for training, other than First Aid and Health training)
- Examples of input of professional development in altering programs
- Transcripts of completed higher qualifications
Classification Level 3.1 - STANDARD 34

Standard Definition: Teachers provide educational leadership both within the centre/service and more broadly within the community – including the school community.

This may be demonstrated by:

- Displaying a high level of communication skills and modelling behaviour, which leads to positive and constructive team work.
- Developing, maintaining and strengthening effective teams where this is possible within the organisational structure.
- Articulating educational philosophy and beliefs, goals of learning programs and teaching practices to the preschool community.
- Sharing knowledge, providing expert advice and support to other teachers to enable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning through collegial interaction, mentoring, consultation and/or other action where this is possible within the organisational structure.
- Supporting other staff and colleagues in utilising a range of contemporary teaching, assessment and reporting methods to improve learning outcomes for children.
- Providing educational leadership in addressing complex issues.
- Making a significant contribution to the development, implementation and evaluation of programs and policy, and responding to initiatives that enhance children's learning.
- Promoting and strengthening relevant links with networks and other service providers and relevant community groups.

Suggested types of evidence you may choose to use:

- Letters, newspapers, etc. illustrating the your educational leadership
- Minutes of meetings, presentations or information nights indicating your leadership and involvement
- Local advisory group notes showing your input
- Professional association involvement
- Contributions to review panel submissions and results
- Professional contributions to meetings, journals and publications
- Being listed on project acknowledgement paper in relation to specific contributions
- Case study submission
- Student placement submission
- Record of participation in a reference group or local advisory group illustrating specific roles and activities
- Record of sessional teaching at tertiary levels and specific teaching outlines