



# Quality Counts California Implementation Guide

Updated June 2020

# QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

## Contents

<b>Intended Audience for this Guide</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What is a QRIS?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>California’s Approach to QRIS</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Early Learning Sites Eligible for Rating</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rating and Monitoring</b>	<b>6</b>
Rating Guidelines	7
Self-report	8
File Review	8
Frequency of Site Rating	8
Communicating the Site Rating	9
Reporting Site Data to the State	10
<b>Assessing Classrooms</b>	<b>10</b>
Frequency of Classroom Assessments	10
Defining Classrooms for Assessment	10
Selecting Classrooms for Assessment	11
Parameters for Selecting Classrooms	11
Announced vs. Unannounced Visits	11
Use of Existing Assessments	12
Recommendations for Observations Using the CLASS Tool	12
Guidelines for Use of CLASS in Multi-age Classrooms	12
Guidelines for Use of CLASS in Diverse Classrooms	13
<b>Environment Rating Scale Anchors and Assessors</b>	<b>14</b>
Statewide Master Anchors	14
Regional ERS Anchor	15
Local ERS Assessors	15
<b>Regional CLASS Trainers and Observers</b>	<b>17</b>
Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainers	17
CLASS Observers	17
CLASS Drift Testing	18
<b>Appendix I: Quality Counts California Rating Matrix</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix II: Guidance for Rating Elements by Points</b>	<b>21</b>

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

Core 1: Child Development and School Readiness	21
Element 1. Child Observation	21
Element 2. Developmental and Health Screenings	23
Core 2: Teachers and Teaching	27
Element 3. Early Childhood Educator Qualifications: Minimum Qualifications for Lead Teacher/Family Child Care Home (FCCH)	27
Element 4. Effective Teacher-Child Interactions: CLASS® Observations (*Use tool for appropriate age group as available)	30
Core 3: Program and Environment	33
Element 5. Ratios and Group Size (Centers Only)	33
Element 6. Environment	35
Element 7. Director Qualifications (Centers Only)	37
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>40</b>

# QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

## I. Intended Audience for this Guide

The Quality Counts California (QCC) Consortium Implementation Guide (Guide) was developed for local, regional, and statewide QCC implementers, raters, and monitors working with rated sites. It includes common agreements designating where consortia have local control, as well as areas where rating must be implemented in a common and consistent way. Consortium agreements ensure local and regional QCC models are implemented to fidelity in accordance with statewide agreements and state policy guidance. The Guide will continue to be updated as new agreements are determined. Please refer to the Glossary for definitions of terms used throughout this Guide. Additional resources for QCC Consortium members can be found at [www.qualitycountscalifornia.net](http://www.qualitycountscalifornia.net).

## II. What is a QRIS?

Early learning and care (ELC) can bring a wide range of benefits for children, parents, and society at large. However, these benefits are conditional on the quality of the early learning and care settings. Expanding access to services without attention to quality will not deliver positive outcomes for children or long-term productivity benefits for society<sup>1</sup>. A *Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)* can provide parents and other consumers information about the quality of early learning settings and help those settings understand where improvement is needed.

A fully functioning QRIS includes the following components: (1) quality standards for programs and practitioners; (2) support for an infrastructure to meet such standards; (3) monitoring and accountability systems to ensure compliance with quality standards; (4) ongoing financial assistance that is linked to meeting quality standards; and (5) engagement and outreach strategies.<sup>2</sup>

## III. California's Approach to QRIS

Quality Counts California (QCC) is designed to support continuous quality improvement of ELC programs across the continuum of ELC setting types. QCC is a statewide system of quality support with activities at the state, regional, and local levels, including a QRIS. QCC helps enhance the quality of ELC programs and informs families about the meanings of different quality levels for children's ELC experiences. The QCC Framework, which was initially developed as part of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant and which has evolved over time, sets the foundation for the quality improvement continuum. The RTT-ELC Consortium, later renamed the QCC Consortium, voluntarily agreed to align their local QRIS to a common "Quality Continuum Framework" that included a common Rating Matrix with some local modifications allowed.

<sup>1</sup> Mitchell, W. A. (July 2005), Stair Steps to Quality. Retrieved from: <http://www.qrisnetwork.org/node/37>

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

The Rating Matrix uses the terms “core” and “elements,” which refer to the three overarching categories and the indicators or components within these categories. The Elements are numbered consecutively one through seven, with elements five and seven for centers only, as shown below.

CORE	Elements
<b>Core 1:</b> Child Development and School Readiness	<b>Element 1.</b> Child Observation <b>Element 2.</b> Developmental and Health Screenings
<b>Core 2:</b> Teachers and Teaching	<b>Element 3.</b> Early Childhood Educator Qualifications: Minimum Qualifications for <i>Lead Teacher</i> /Family Child Care Home <b>Element 4.</b> Effective Teacher-Child Interactions
<b>Core 3:</b> Program and Environment	<b>Element 5.</b> Licensing and Regulatory Requirements: Ratios and Group Size (Centers Only) <b>Element 6.</b> Program Administration and Leadership: Environment Rating Scale(s) – ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R <b>Element 7.</b> Program Administration and Leadership: Director Qualifications (Centers Only)

The RTT-ELC Consortia also agreed upon the following Tier Rating Chart based on the final Program Quality Score in points. **Points may not deviate from what is specified below, even in locally determined tiers.**

	Tier 1 (blocked, receive 1 point per element)	Tier 2 (locally determined— point values, blocked, or combination)	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5 (can include additional locally determined requirements)
Centers	7 points	8–19 points	20–25 points	26–31 points	32 points or more
Family Child Care Homes	5 points	6–13 points	14–17 points	18–21 points	22 points or more

The implementation guidelines ensure consistency of implementation across counties. To allow local flexibility, QCC consortia could elect to make local decisions about the tiers that were not commonly adopted, as well as areas of implementation that were left to local control.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

In Fiscal Year 2015–16, the work of the RTT-ELC Consortium expanded to a statewide effort, drawing on the nationally recognized effectiveness factors or standards that lead to improved learning and development outcomes for children. The *RTT-ELC Framework* is now the *QCC Quality Continuum Framework*. QCC is funded through a layering of multiple funding sources, including First 5 California, the California Department of Education, and local funding. For more information on Quality Counts California, visit [www.qualitycountscalifornia.net](http://www.qualitycountscalifornia.net).

### IV. Early Learning Sites Eligible for Rating

An **early learning site** is operated by an administration or entity at one physical location. If two administrations/entities are operating on the same site and are operating separately from one another (e.g., co-located), each is counted as a separate site.

For sites licensed by the California Department of Social Services, the definition “*in good standing*” is to be used. If a site’s license is changed to anything other than “*in good standing*,” the QCC rating is suspended.

In addition, local consortium may:

- Choose to impose a time period prior to rating without incident
- Determine reinstatement protocols

Exceptions to licensed programs that are eligible to participate include:

- Cal-SAFE child development programs
- Tribal-approved child care programs
- Military installation child care programs
- Adult Education preschool programs that are legally exempt from licensing
- Other programs and *classrooms* operated by school districts, such as IDEA Part B or Part C funded programs

For additional information on eligible sites and requirements, please see the applicable funding requirements.

### V. Rating and Monitoring

All consortia agree to implement all tools, measures, and documents to fidelity, adhering to the State Master Anchors’ approaches. Preserving the components that made the original practice effective can directly impact the success of desired outcomes. One

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

recommended way to ensure high-quality implementation is for consortia to identify and clearly stipulate four distinct QCC functions:

- **Raters** review and validate portfolio documentation used to determine ratings.
- **External Assessors** are deployed by the local QCC Consortium and reliable on the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and conduct this portion of the rating. **External CLASS Observers** are certified on the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System*® (CLASS®) tools and conduct this portion of the rating. Note: Throughout this document, both are referred to as “assessors.”
- **Monitors** ensure sites maintain their rated quality and compliance with QRIS requirements.
- **Technical Assistance (TA) Providers** support the creation and/or implementation of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). TA providers also may assist sites with the development of the basic portfolio for rating, in addition to providing quality improvement coaching and other types of consultation.

While some functions may be fulfilled by the same person, individuals cannot serve as an external assessor and provide technical assistance or coaching services to the same group of teachers/sites.

### Rating Guidelines

The QCC Rating Matrix employs a portfolio-based system (with monitoring and administrative verification) for a site to self-report some elements of quality, and a file review for others, as follows:

Element	Point Value				
	1	2	3	4	5
1 Child Observation/Assessment	File Review At All Levels				
2 Developmental and Health Screening	File Review At All Levels				
3 Lead Teacher Qualifications and <i>Professional Development</i>	Self-Report At All Levels Supported With Documentation/Reporting By The Workforce Registry				
4 CLASS Assessment	Point Values 1 And 2 - Self-Report Point Values 3,4 And 5 - External Assessment				
5 Ratios and Group Size	Point Values 1 And 2 - Self-Report Point Values 3,4 And 5 - Verification By Assessor				
6 Environment Rating Scale	Point Values 1 And 2 - Self-Report Point Values 3,4 And 5 - External Assessment				
7 Director Qualifications	Self-Report At All Levels Supported With Documentation/Reporting By The Workforce Registry				

# QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

## Self-report

All QCC sites will use a portfolio for self-report elements. In order to verify the level of quality, all programs will be required to provide common documents demonstrating the level of quality for each element of the QCC Rating Matrix. The portfolio may be managed online (e.g., via upload) or on paper. This is a local decision. All portfolios should be subject to random observation and file review at the discretion of the local consortium.

## File Review

Two children's files from each classroom are to be randomly selected for review of child assessments and screenings by the external rater during observation visits. (If the child has been in the program fewer than 60 days, another file may be selected.) To obtain the corresponding point value for each element, every file reviewed should have evidence of screening and assessment. One hundred percent of files checked must contain evidence of a child assessment and screening or other alternatives. Alternatives to developmental and health screening include a parent "opt-out" form, a detailed documentation of repeated attempts (as determined locally) to obtain parental consent, or the existence of a current Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

As an alternative to viewing individual child paper files, it is acceptable to view a centralized tracking system or database files (such as for child assessment, or health and developmental screening). Evidence must demonstrate one hundred percent compliance consistent with Implementation Guide requirements.

## Frequency of Site Rating

A site's rating is valid for three or five years depending on tier rating, from the time the overall site rating is assigned. For example:

If the site was rated in:	And the result was Tier 1, 2, or 3, the site's rating is valid through:	And the result was Tier 4 or 5, the site's rating is valid through:
March 2020	March 2023	March 2025
November 2019	November 2022	November 2024
August 2018	August 2021	August 2023

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

*Participating sites* are to develop quality improvement plans after they receive a full rating and commit to engaging in an ongoing continuous quality improvement process between ratings. QCC Consortia will monitor participating sites between ratings. Re-rating is required when a site license changes due to a change of physical location. The decision to re-rate a site for other reasons during the rating period is a local decision. Some local decisions that may trigger reconsideration of the rating before the rating period has passed include:

- Significant turnover in staff
- New director
- Changes that warrant re-assessment of an individual classroom, including a change in the lead teacher of a formerly assessed classroom
- Significant licensing violation
- Other evidence of changes related to the criteria upon which they were rated
- Other reasons determined by local consortium

### Communicating the Site Rating

Formal ratings must be made available to the public. The emphasis on publicly available ratings highlights consumer awareness as a key component of the success of a QRIS as a mechanism for supporting families in selecting high-quality ELC programs for their children.

Consortia may choose to communicate ratings as tier or star levels; combine levels into three categories, such as “beginning,” “achieving,” and “advancing;” or use another communication system to convey rating information to the public.

Consortia also have discretion on how ratings are publicized. Please note: Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (R&Rs) are required per the reauthorized Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (CCDBG) (Section 658E.c.2.E.i.II.) to provide information on ratings to families. Consortia also may share ratings by:

- Posting at participating early learning setting to indicate QRIS participation and tiered rating
- Posting on a website (e.g., R&R, and/or local QRIS website)

Public communication should include the effective dates of the rating.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### Reporting Site Data to the State

Consortia are required to report data to the State once per year, including sites' overall ratings and element scores. Details about how and when to report data are available at <https://qualitycountsca.net/quality-partners/consortium-members/>.

## VI. Assessing Classrooms

### Frequency of Classroom Assessments

External assessments are conducted for Tiers 3 through 5 for select elements using the CLASS tool (Element 4) and the ERS (Element 6) for the appropriate age level. Refer to guidelines within the tools if classrooms are mixed age. California Master Anchors can provide additional clarification if necessary.

Based on the local QRIS model and site readiness, rated sites may receive a formal, external assessment using the ERS and the CLASS, if warranted, every three years (sites rated at Tiers 1 through 3) or five years (sites rated at Tiers 4 and 5). The same classrooms, selected through random sampling, will receive both the CLASS and the ERS assessment in the same year, or within 13 months of the final rating. For the purpose of assessment, a “year” is considered 13 consecutive months. For example, if the ERS assessments are conducted in May, and the CLASS assessments are conducted on the same classrooms with the same lead teachers in September, then the program must have a completed rating by June of the following year in order for the ERS assessment to be valid.

### Defining Classrooms for Assessment

Classrooms are defined by the *teaching team* and the *group of children*. The table below demonstrates several scenarios to help determine the number of classrooms.

Scenario	Number of Classrooms	Rationale
AM Preschool + PM Preschool Same teaching team for AM and PM	1	Ages served and teaching team are the same.
AM Toddlers + PM Preschool Same teaching team for AM and PM	2	Teaching team is the same. Different <i>age groups</i> require different assessments.
AM Preschool + PM Preschool Different Teaching team in AM and PM	2	Same age group served in the morning and afternoon. Different teaching teams require different assessments.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### Selecting Classrooms for Assessment

Consortium will assess one-third of classrooms of each age group at a site, regardless of funding stream and total overall number of classrooms, including at least one classroom in each age group. See definitions of age groups in the glossary.

**NOTE: For sites participating in CSPP Block Grant funding and sites with mixed funding:** Rating is completed at the site level – classrooms selected for assessment are chosen as described within this Implementation Guide. This may result in a site with CSPP Block Grant funding receiving a rating that is not based on the assessments of any classrooms participating in the CSPP Block Grant. Classrooms participating in the CSPP Block Grant should not be rated separately from the rest of the classrooms at the site.

Guidelines to determine the number of classrooms to assess with the CLASS and ERS:

- **Sites serving a single age group of children** (e.g., all toddlers or all preschoolers)

<b>Number of classrooms at site</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Total number of classrooms to assess</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

- **Sites with different classrooms for children of different ages** (be sure to select at least one classroom from each age group)

<b>Number of classrooms at site</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Minimum number of classrooms to assess</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

### Parameters for Selecting Classrooms

For classroom selection and random selection process, exclude classrooms (use another randomly chosen classroom as an alternate) or postpone a scheduled assessment/visit when there is a: (1) substitute teacher; or (2) new teacher to the site (30 calendar days or fewer).

The minimum number of children required to be present in a particular classroom in order to rate will be locally determined as long as it remains within the parameters of the tool being used for assessment.

### Announced vs. Unannounced Visits

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

Consortia will conduct scheduled visits with sites. Local consortia determine how far in advance the visits may be scheduled. Notification to the site of randomly selected classrooms to be assessed on ERS and CLASS will occur the day of the visit. The assessor will ensure the classroom being assessed is staffed by the lead teacher on record (or long-term sub who has been serving as lead teacher in the classroom longer than 30 days).

### Use of Existing Assessments

A consortium shall accept ERS and CLASS assessments previously conducted in lieu of the county consortium sending an assessor ONLY if the assessment was:

- Completed within 13 months of the rating
- Performed by a valid and reliable external assessor (deployed by the local QCC Consortium)
- Conducted with the same lead teacher, child age group, and physical location as the randomly selected classroom

### Recommendations for Observations Using the CLASS Tool

When coding with any CLASS tool, the observer evaluates the effectiveness of interactions for the target age level. In any classroom setting, multiple adults may be present during the observation, requiring the observer to consider how each adult interacts with children and how those adults jointly influence the overall classroom experience.

The consortium agreed the *CLASS observation* may be conducted in classrooms with at least one child present.

Local consortium policy guides other observation protocol, such as:

- When a classroom receives a CLASS assessment (e.g., if at a lower points level than required in the rating matrix)
- The number of children in the classroom (or target age level) that need to be present in order to observe and if/when to reschedule an assessment to maximize attendance

### Guidelines for Use of CLASS in Multi-age Classrooms

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

In a multi-age setting, the observer should keep the target age range in mind and pay particular attention to the interactions associated with those ages. Interactions with children outside the target age level are considered in coding, only if they enhance or detract from those experienced by the intended children. For example, a teacher may have effective and warm interactions with an infant during a diaper change; but if the assessor is observing with the Toddler CLASS measure, and the toddlers are not involved, the assessor would not code those interactions. On the other hand, if the teacher involves toddlers in care by asking them to get a diaper or help wash the baby's hands, those interactions would be considered in coding.

Determining whether one tool or two will be used in multi-age classrooms:

- If using one tool and need to determine which measure to use, consider the goals of the observation and the expertise of coders. Also consider the age range of each tool (e.g., the infant tool can be used in classrooms with children as old as 15 months).
- When local decision dictates use of more than one age-level tool in a multi-age classroom, observers may alternate between age levels either by:
  - Making one visit – obtain three cycles of each tool during the classroom visit (total of six cycles); or
  - Making two visits – observe one age level at the first visit and the other age level during the second visit. Each visit/tool should include four cycles.

### Guidelines for Use of CLASS in Diverse Classrooms

Early learning settings in the QCC serve children from diverse backgrounds, languages, and cultures. It is imperative the observer is culturally sensitive and able to understand the adult-child interactions to score appropriately.

The consortium agreed the CLASS observer must understand 85–90 percent of the teacher's communication with the child/ren to consider the assessment reliable. This is particularly important in Pre-Kindergarten classrooms.

Other things to consider when observing in a diverse classroom include:

- Some behaviors are considered disrespectful in certain cultures. For example, forcing eye contact would be uncomfortable for a child and would not be demonstrating respect. But eye contact is only one of several markers of respect, and it is not required for a teacher to force eye contact to demonstrate respect.
- When the early educator and child engage in back-and-forth exchanges, the observer must understand both the adult and child to accurately assess scaffolding,

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

feedback loops, and other indicators in the Pre-K CLASS Instructional Support Domain.

- The consortium strongly encourages using assessors who speak the language of the children at the site and understand the cultures.

### VII. Environment Rating Scale Anchors and Assessors

This section outlines the roles of Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Anchors and assessors. The following graphic shows the relationship between each of these roles at the state, regional, and local/consortia levels. The California Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales Anchor document which outlines the roles of state, regional, and local Environment Rating Scales ERS Anchors and assessors in Quality Counts California can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13E3EwyQdfSLgOt2iGVFn3fhGNOWrrzER/view?usp=sharing>.

#### Statewide Master Anchors

State Master Anchors (MAs) carry out the following activities:

- MAs maintain reliability to one another through recertification every 18 months with drift checks every six months.
- Initial certification of Regional ERS Anchor (RA) and one day Inter-Rater Reliability (IRR) every 18 months thereafter. If the Regional ERS Anchor does not reach 90 percent reliability in one-day IRR, a three-day recertification with QCC MA. (Note: assessment vendors must be certified with an MA or RA at their own cost to be approved to conduct QCC assessments for rating).
- Provide advice and support for Regional ERS Anchors as they train and certify local assessors.
- Develop resources for Regional ERS Anchors to use when conducting local training and reliability certification.
- Provide information and assistance to Regional ERS Anchors to carry out IRR activities with consortia assessors.
- Reach consensus about questions that arise during assessment, and disseminate responses and clarifications to local Anchors to ensure consistent interpretation across the QCC.
- Conduct in-person and web-based training and meetings with Regional ERS Anchors to build consensus and strengthen capacity to conduct ERS assessments and certify assessors.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### Regional ERS Anchor

According to the First 5 IMPACT *Regional Coordination and Training and Technical Assistance Hubs (Hubs)* RFA, the Hubs are required to identify at least one Regional ERS Anchor who can certify local assessors and support the fidelity of assessment practices and consistency of tool interpretation across the region. F5CA will support certification of Regional ERS Anchor(s) identified by the Hub, while the Hub is responsible for coordinating Regional ERS Anchor responsibilities.

A Regional ERS Anchor is a Hub-designated individual authorized to certify reliability of ERS assessors at Level 1 and Level 2. The Regional ERS Anchor is considered an experienced, reliable "expert" assessor responsible for interpretation of scores and training of other assessors. Each Hub region should designate at least one Regional ERS Anchor on each ERS tool. A large consortium also may designate a Local ERS Anchor. The region or large consortium may have one Anchor for all three ERS tools or three different Anchors – one for each tool.

Regional ERS Anchors must achieve at least 90 percent reliability with a State MA. However, this person is not considered an Anchor until designated as such by a region (Hub) or consortium and given the authority to carry out Anchor responsibilities. Following initial certification, each Regional ERS Anchor must complete IRR with another Regional ERS Anchor every six months, at a minimum, and recertify with a state MA every 18 months.

The Regional ERS Anchors shall have the authority to:

- Conduct assessments.
- Train and certify ERS assessors.
- Coordinate IRR for ERS assessors in their region every six months, at minimum, or at least once between recertifications.

F5CA MAs may ask Regional ERS Anchors to participate in virtual or in-person learning communities and/or meetings, as well as contribute to the overall QCC Assessor Management System by working with the F5CA MAs on ERS-related clarifications, policies, and statewide practices.

Regional ERS Anchors also may be given responsibility by consortia in the Hub region to review reports written by ERS assessors and conduct ERS training for coaches and early childhood educators.

### Local ERS Assessors

All ERS assessors who rate early learning sites in the QCC shall be external (independent) to the site being assessed and conduct the assessments in accordance

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

with the policies and procedures set forth by the State Master Anchors. Assessors participate in a rigorous certification process and complete multiple practice observations to ensure they have learned how to use the scales/instrument to measure the quality of early childhood sites. Assessors are deemed reliable when they achieve and maintain a minimum of 85 percent reliability (agreement) with an Anchor. Only a Consortium/Hub-designated Regional ERS Anchor or a State MA is authorized to certify assessors for the QCC. Following initial certification, assessors should complete IRR every six months, at minimum, and recertify every 18 months.

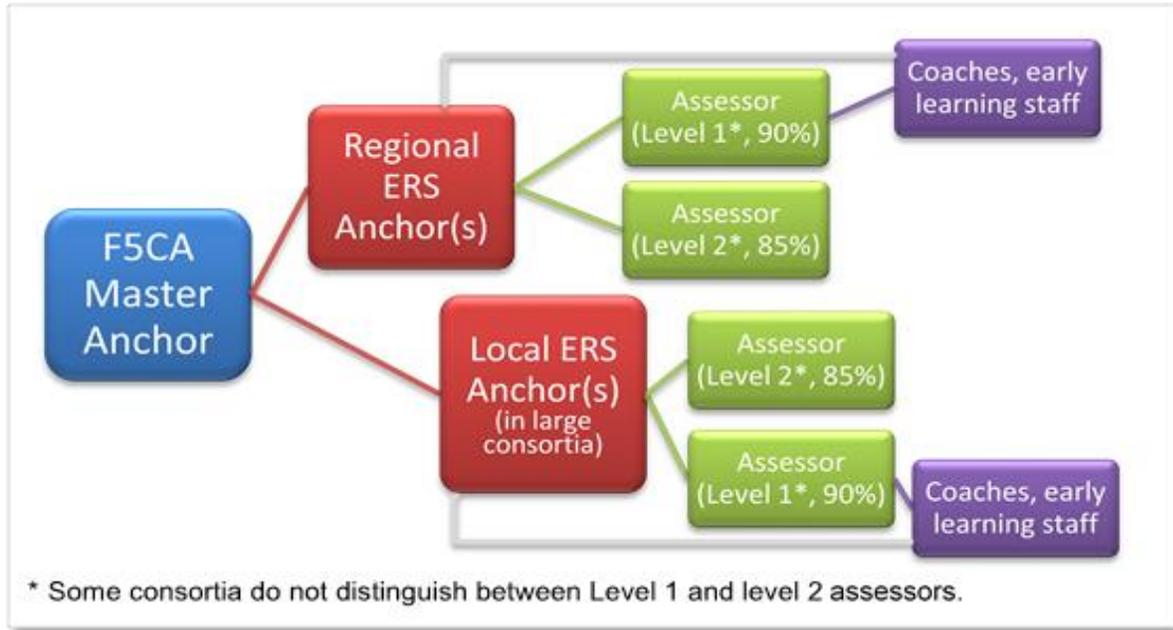
Assessors shall demonstrate reliability during IRR to continue to assess using the ERS tool. Assessors have up to three opportunities to pass IRR. Local consortia determine next steps after a third failed attempt at reliability during IRR.

There are two recommended levels of ERS assessor:

- **Level 1 ERS assessors** must achieve 90 percent reliability with an Anchor across three consecutive assessments for initial certification and recertification, and complete one assessment with a Regional ERS Anchor for IRR. Because of their higher level of reliability, consortia may (but are not required to) give Level 1 ERS assessors other responsibilities, such as carrying out IRR with Level 2 ERS assessors and reviewing reports written by Level 2 ERS assessors.
- **Level 2 ERS assessors** shall achieve 85 percent reliability with an Anchor across three consecutive assessments for initial certification and recertification, and complete one assessment with a Regional ERS Anchor or Level 1 assessor for IRR.

Some consortia do not distinguish between Level 1 and Level 2 ERS assessors, requiring all assessors to achieve and maintain a minimum of 85 percent reliability and use assessors only to carry out assessment responsibilities.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide



### VIII. Regional CLASS Trainers and Observers

#### Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainers

A CLASS Trainer is certified by Teachstone to conduct training on a specific tool and is called an Affiliate Trainer. The QCC recommends, but does not require, each region to identify a Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainer to support the region's CLASS needs. Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainers who work within the QCC are authorized to provide training to other partners within their local QRIS.

Geography and/or other needs may call for each consortium within a regional Hub to have its own consortium-dedicated affiliate trainer(s), or several consortia may elect to share a Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainer.

The Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainers should maintain annual certification through Teachstone. If authorized by the regional Hub, the Regional CLASS Affiliate Trainer may:

- Coordinate regional training and observer certification.
- Review reports written by CLASS observers.

#### CLASS Observers

Whether regional or consortia-specific, CLASS observers carry out assessments on applicable age-level tool(s) and complete reports, as applicable within a consortium or for several consortia within a regional Hub.

## **QCC Consortium Implementation Guide**

CLASS observers must have proof of current certification from Teachstone demonstrating reliability on applicable tool.

### **CLASS Drift Testing**

CLASS drift testing must be conducted at least one time between annual recertifications. The drift testing may be carried out in one of two ways:

- Online calibration during an assigned period of time – code one 20-minute video and achieve at least 80 percent reliability. Observers also may review a one-hour webinar debrief of the video after coding.
- Live double-code with an experienced CLASS-certified assessor identified by the consortium.

Observers must demonstrate reliability during drift testing to continue to observe using the CLASS tool. Observers have up to three opportunities to meet 80 percent reliability during drift testing. Between drift tests, observers may receive technical assistance from a State Master Anchor or Regional CLASS Trainer/Observer to support success. Hubs and/or local consortia determine next steps after a third failed attempt at drift test reliability.

# QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

## Appendix I: Quality Counts California Rating Matrix

### Rating Matrix with Elements and Points for Consortia Common Tiers 1, 3, and 5

ELEMENT	1 POINT	2 POINTS	3 POINTS	4 POINTS	5 POINTS
<b>CORE I: CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS</b>					
<b>1. Child Observation</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Not required	<input type="checkbox"/> Program uses evidence-based child assessment/observation tool annually that covers all five domains of development	<input type="checkbox"/> Program uses valid and reliable child assessment/observation tool aligned with CA <i>Foundations &amp; Frameworks</i> <sup>1</sup> twice a year	<input type="checkbox"/> DRDP (minimum twice a year) and results used to inform curriculum planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Program uses DRDP twice a year and uploads into DRDP Tech and results used to inform curriculum planning
<b>2. Developmental and Health Screenings</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Title 22 Regulations	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Screening Form (Community Care Licensing form LIC 701 "Physician's Report - Child Care Centers" or equivalent) used at entry, then: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Annually</li><li>OR</li><li>2. Ensures vision and hearing screenings are conducted annually</li></ol>	<input type="checkbox"/> Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using a <b>valid and reliable developmental screening tool</b> at entry and as indicated by results thereafter <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria from point level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the <b>ASQ</b> at entry and as indicated by results thereafter <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria from point level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the <b>ASQ &amp; ASQ-SE</b> , if indicated, at entry, then as indicated by results thereafter <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Program staff uses children's screening results to make referrals and implement intervention strategies and adaptations as appropriate <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Meets Criteria from point level 2
<b>CORE II: TEACHERS AND TEACHING</b>					
<b>3. Minimum Qualifications for Lead Teacher/ Family Child Care Home (FCCH)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Meets Title 22 Regulations (Center: 12 units of Early Childhood Education (ECE)/Child Development (CD) FCCH: 15 hours of training on preventive health practices)	<input type="checkbox"/> Center: 24 units of ECE/CD <sup>2</sup> <b>OR</b> Associate Teacher Permit <input type="checkbox"/> FCCH: 12 units of ECE/CD <b>OR</b> Associate Teacher Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 units of ECE/CD + 16 units of General Education <b>OR</b> Teacher Permit <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours professional development (PD) annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree (AA/AS) in ECE/CD (or closely related field) <b>OR</b> AA/AS in any field plus 24 units of ECE/CD <b>OR</b> Site Supervisor Permit <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree in ECE/CD (or closely related field) <b>OR</b> BA/BS in any field plus/with 24 units of ECE/CD (or master's degree in ECE/CD) <b>OR</b> Program Director Permit <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually
<b>4. Effective Teacher-Child Interactions: CLASS Assessments</b> ("Use tool for appropriate age group as available")	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with CLASS for appropriate age group as available by one representative from the site	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer to inform the program's professional development/improvement plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer with minimum CLASS scores: <b>Pre-K</b> ▪ Emotional Support – 5 ▪ Instructional Support – 3 ▪ Classroom Organization – 5 <b>Toddler</b> ▪ Emotional & Behavioral Support – 5 ▪ Engaged Support for Learning – 3.5 <b>Infant</b> ▪ Responsive Caregiving (RC) – 5.0	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent assessment with CLASS with minimum CLASS scores: <b>Pre-K</b> ▪ Emotional Support – 5.5 ▪ Instructional Support – 3.5 ▪ Classroom Organization – 5.5 <b>Toddler</b> ▪ Emotional & Behavioral Support – 5.5 ▪ Engaged Support for Learning – 4 <b>Infant</b> ▪ Responsive Caregiving (RC) – 5.5

1. Approved assessments are: Creative Curriculum GOLD, Early Learning Scale by National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER), and Brigance Inventory of Early Development III.
2. For all ECE/CD units, the core eight are desired but not required.

**Note:** Point values are not indicative of Tiers 1-5 but reflect a range of points that can be earned toward assigning a tier rating (see total point range).

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

ELEMENT	1 POINT	2 POINTS	3 POINTS	4 POINTS	5 POINTS
<b>CORE III: PROGRAM AND ENVIRONMENT - Administration and Leadership</b>					
<b>5. Ratios and Group Size</b> (Centers Only beyond licensing regulations)	<input type="checkbox"/> Center: Title 22 Regulations <b>Infant</b> Ratio of 1:4 <b>Toddler Option</b> Ratio of 1:6 <b>Preschool</b> Ratio of 1:12 <input type="checkbox"/> FCCH: Title 22 Regulations <i>(excluded from point values in ratio and group size)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size  <b>Infant/Toddler</b> – 4:16 <b>Toddler</b> – 3:18 <b>Preschool</b> – 3:36	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size  <b>Infant/Toddler</b> – 3:12 <b>Toddler</b> – 2:12 <b>Preschool</b> – 2:24	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size  <b>Infant/Toddler</b> – 3:12 or 2:8 <b>Toddler</b> – 2:10 <b>Preschool</b> – 3:24 or 2:20	<input type="checkbox"/> Center - Ratio: Group Size  <b>Infant/Toddler</b> – 3:9 or better <b>Toddler</b> – 3:12 or better <b>Preschool</b> – 1:8 ratio and group size of no more than 20
<b>6. Program Environment Rating Scale(s)</b> (Use tool for appropriate setting: ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Familiarity with ERS and every classroom uses ERS as a part of a Quality Improvement Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Assessment on the whole tool. Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent ERS assessment. All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 5.0	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent ERS assessment. All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score level of 5.5 OR Current National Accreditation approved by the California Department of Education
<b>7. Director Qualifications</b> (Centers Only)	<input type="checkbox"/> 12 units ECE/CD+ 3 units management/ administration	<input type="checkbox"/> 24 units ECE/CD + 16 units General Education +/with 3 units management/ administration  OR Master Teacher Permit	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree with 24 units ECE/CD +/with 6 units management/ administration and 2 units supervision OR Site Supervisor Permit <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree with 24 units ECE/CD +/with 8 units management/ administration <b>OR</b> Program Director Permit <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually	<input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree with 30 units ECE/CD including specialized courses +/with 8 units management/ administration, <b>OR</b> Administrative Credential <b>AND</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 21 hours PD annually
<b>TOTAL POINT RANGES</b>					
<b>Program Type</b>	<b>Common-Tier 1</b>	<b>Local-Tier 2<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>Common-Tier 3</b>	<b>Common-Tier 4</b>	<b>Local-Tier 5<sup>4</sup></b>
Centers 7 Elements for 35 points	Blocked (7 points) – Must Meet All Elements	Point Range 8 to 19	Point Range 20 to 25	Point Range 26 to 31	Point Range 32 and above
FCCHs 5 Elements for 25 points	Blocked (5 points) – Must Meet All Elements	Point Range 6 to 13	Point Range 14 to 17	Point Range 18 to 21	Point Range 22 and above

3. Local Tier 2: Local decision if Blocked or Points and if there are additional elements
4. Local Tier 5: Local decision if there are additional elements included California Department of Education, February 2014 Updated May 2015; Effective July 1, 2015

## Appendix II: Guidance for Rating Elements by Points

### Core 1: Child Development and School Readiness

#### Element 1. Child Observation

##### 1 POINT

**Indicator:** Not Required

**Detail:** Child Observation and Assessment is not required at Common Tier 1/BLOCK. Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive one point for this element.

##### 2 POINTS

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

**Detail:** Local consortia may use the list of evidence-based child assessment/observation tools from the list below, create local guidelines, or both. Local criteria must include evidence that the tool is observational, annual, and, at minimum, assesses the following developmental domains: physical (gross and fine motor), social-emotional, cognitive, and communication.

Optional, partial list of evidence-based tools:

- High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for Infants and Toddlers
- High/Scope Preschool Child Observation Record (COR), Second Edition
- Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 3
- Work Sampling, Developmental Guidelines, Preschool 4
- Learning Accomplishment Profile-3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (preschool)
- The Ounce Scale (infant/toddler)
- NIEER Early Learning Scale

*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.

Random selection of two children's files per classroom during observation visits will provide evidence of use of evidence-based child assessment/observation for each child. (If a child has been in the program fewer than 60 days, another file may be reviewed.)

##### 3 POINTS

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

**Indicator:** Program uses *valid and reliable child assessment/ observation tool* aligned with California Foundations and Frameworks twice a year

**Detail:** Valid and reliable child observation tools must be approved by the California Department of Education prior to awarding the site three points for this element. Currently approved tools are:

- Teaching Strategies GOLD® (Creative Curriculum) assessment
- Early Learning Scale by National Institute of Early Education Research (NIEER) available from Lakeshore Learning School Supply
- Brigance Inventory of Early Development III

Assessment tool developers must contact Serene Yee at [syee@cde.ca.gov](mailto:syee@cde.ca.gov) or 916-322-1048 if they wish to submit documentation of alignment with the *California Foundations and Frameworks*.

Programs without evidence of twice-annual child assessments due to the rating visit occurring prior to the second assessment due date may meet this requirement in one of two ways:

1. Programs may show evidence from the prior year of two cycles of assessment.
2. Programs without assessment evidence from prior year are required to submit actual scores from the second annual child assessment in order to maintain their score on this item and overall site rating. (Verification process is a local decision.)

### **4 POINTS**

**Indicator:** DRDP (minimum twice a year) and results used to inform curriculum planning

**Detail:** All users of *Desired Results Developmental Profile* (DRDP) must use the DRDP 2015 version. Sites may choose, at their discretion, to use the comprehensive, fundamental, or essential view.

Programs without evidence of twice-annual child assessments due to the rating visit occurring prior to the second assessment due date may meet this requirement in one of two ways:

1. Programs may show evidence from the prior year of two cycles of assessment.
2. Programs without assessment evidence from the prior year are required to submit actual scores from the second annual child assessment in order to maintain their score on this item and overall site rating. (Verification process is a local decision.)

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:

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

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:
  - Written curriculum statements
  - Lesson plans
  - Planning webs
  - Notes from planning sessions with information on how a purchased curriculum (if used) considers assessment of child progress

### **5 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Program uses DRDP twice a year and uploads into DRDP Online and results used to inform curriculum planning.

**Detail:** Use of *DRDP Online* is free to Head Start, state funded programs, and all QCC 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.

### **Core 1: Child Development and School Readiness**

#### **Element 2. Developmental and Health Screenings**

##### **1 POINT**

**Indicator:** Meets Title 22 Regulations

**Detail:** 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, available at <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/pubsforms/forms/CtrlForms/cdph286.pdf> and centers use form LIC 701, available at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/cdssweb/PG166.htm>. Forms must be printed on blue paper. **Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive 1 point for this element.**

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### **2 POINTS**

**Indicator:** 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

**Detail:**

**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

### **3 POINTS**

**Indicator:** *Program works with families* to screen all children using a **valid and reliable child screening tool** at entry and **as indicated by results thereafter AND**

Meets criteria for Point Value 2

**Detail:** Below is partial list of valid and reliable child screening tools. Other tools are acceptable at the discretion of the consortium with documentation of validity and reliability.

Partial List:

- Mullen Scales of Early Learning
- DIAL 3
- *Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)*

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

- 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.

### **4 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the **ASQ** at entry and as indicated by results thereafter **AND**

Meets criteria from Point Value 2

**Detail:** 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 the local Regional Center, school district, and/or other resources.

For definitions of ASQ, see glossary.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### **5 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Program works with families to ensure screening of all children using the **ASQ & ASQ-SE**, if indicated, at entry, 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

**Detail:** For definition of *Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional* (ASQ-SE), see glossary.

"If indicated" is a local decision acting in the best interest of the child.

# QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

## Core 2: Teachers and Teaching

### Element 3. Early Childhood Educator Qualifications: Minimum Qualifications for Lead Teacher/Family Child Care Home (FCCH)

#### 1 POINT

**Indicator:** Meets Title 22 Regulations

**Detail:** Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive one point for this element.

#### 2 POINTS

**Indicator:**

**Center:** 24 units of ECE/CD (core 8)

**FCCH:** 12 units of ECE/CD (core 8)

**OR**

Associate Teacher Permit

**Detail:** In Point Values 2 through 5, 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.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

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/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl797.pdf?sfvrsn=665bc585\\_0](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl797.pdf?sfvrsn=665bc585_0)

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.ietf.org](http://www.ietf.org). Additional organizations approved by CTC for transcript evaluation can be found at [https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl635.pdf?sfvrsn=bb4f6e6a\\_8](https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/leaflets/cl635.pdf?sfvrsn=bb4f6e6a_8).

*Core 8 courses* are desired but not required.

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 at 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.

### **3 POINTS**

**Indicator:** 24 units of ECE/CD and 16 units of General Education

**OR**

Teacher Permit **AND**

21 hours professional development (PD) annually

**Detail:** Point Value 3 is equivalent to the Teacher Permit.

Professional development activities may include classes, documented workshops, coaching sessions, equivalency of coursework, or other activities as determined locally by consortium. PD activities should stem from the needs of the teacher and program, based on the individual professional growth plan and/or the site's Quality Improvement Plan. Professional development includes, but is not limited to, the QCC Continuous Quality Improvement Framework.

*Annually* in regard to PD is a 12-month period and can be calculated from the point of enrollment in QCC or as otherwise defined by the local consortium.

Method to verify 21 hours of professional development is a local consortium decision.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### **4 POINTS**

**Indicator:** 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 PD annually

**Detail:** Point Value 4 is equivalent to the Site Supervisor Permit.

Consortium may accept at its discretion Option two of the Teacher Permit if the ECE/CD unit requirement is met.

Method to verify 21 hours of professional development is a local consortium decision.

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 on Teacher Credentialing's approach.

### **5 POINTS**

**Indicator:** 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 PD annually

**Detail:** Point Value 5 is equivalent to the Program Director Permit.

Consortia may accept at their discretion option two of the Master Teacher permit if the ECE/CD unit requirement is met.

Method to verify 21 hours of professional development is a local consortium decision.

## Core 2: Teachers and Teaching

### Element 4. Effective Teacher-Child Interactions: CLASS® Observations (\*Use tool for appropriate age group as available)

#### 1 POINT

**Indicator:** Not applicable

**Detail:** Child Observation and Assessment is not required at Common Tier 1/BLOCK. Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive one point for this element.

#### 2 POINTS

**Indicator:** Familiarity with CLASS (e.g., two-hour overview training) for appropriate age group as available by one representative from the site (on-line or face-to-face via facilitator)

**Detail:** The decision about what constitutes *familiarity with CLASS* is a local one. It is recommended that CLASS presentations be conducted by a Certified CLASS Trainer.

#### 3 POINTS

**Indicator:** Independent CLASS assessment by reliable observer (using the appropriate tool) to inform the program's professional development/ improvement plan

**Detail:** 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.

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).

In classrooms with multiple age groups, it is a local decision as to whether to use the age level tool appropriate for the highest number of children or to alternate two tools. If children are equally distributed, consult Teachstone ([www.teachstone.org](http://www.teachstone.org)) for advice.

#### 4 POINTS

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

**Pre-K:**

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

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### **Toddler:**

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

### **Infant:**

Responsive Caregiving Domain (RC) – 5.0

## **5 POINTS**

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

### **Pre-K:**

- ES – 5.5
- IS – 3.5
- CO – 5.5

### **Toddler:**

- EBS – 5.5
- ESL – 4

### **Infant:**

RC – 5.5

## **DETAIL (POINTS 4 & 5)**

**Detail:** Minimum scores are recommended by Teachstone, LLC, and based on research on the CLASS and on the design of QCC.

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.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

Example:

Classroom	Domain Score	Domain Score	Domain Score	Points for Element
Pre-K Alligators	ES 5.42	IS 3.13	CO 5.89	4
Pre-K Bears	ES 5.10	IS 2.95	CO 5.68	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 by 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

Site points for Element 4 (Teacher-Child Interactions) = 3

# QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

## Core 3: Program and Environment

### Element 5. Ratios and Group Size (Centers Only)

#### **1 POINT**

**Indicator:** Center: Title 22 Regulations

Infant Ratio of 1:4

Toddler Option Ratio of 1:6

Preschool Ratio of 1:12

FCCH: Title 22 Regulations

(excluded from point values in ratio and group size)

#### **2 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Center:

Infant/Toddler Ratio of 4:16

Toddler Ratio of 3:18

Preschool Ratio of 3:36

#### **3 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Center:

Infant/Toddler Ratio of 3:12

Toddler Ratio of 2:12

Preschool Ratio of 2:24

#### **4 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Center:

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

Toddler Ratio of 2:10

Preschool Ratio of 3:24 or 2:20

#### **5 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Center:

Infant/Toddler 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

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### **DETAIL (POINTS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)**

**Detail:** Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive one point for this element.

Volunteers may not be used in ratio and group size calculations. Title 22 regulations require that adult: child ratios include only employed adults.

#### ***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.

Based on Management Bulletin 14-02

#### ***Ratios***

Centers must meet the Community Care Licensing standards at a minimum.

Staff must meet the needs of the children in attendance and provide visual observation and supervision at all times. Centers may need additional staff depending on the age of children and their needs. Additional staff are needed for backup. An aide cannot be left alone with children except during naptime and to escort them to the restroom.

- One teacher can supervise no more than 12 children.
- One teacher and one aide can supervise up to 15 children.
- A fully qualified teacher and an assistant with six early childhood education units can supervise up to 18 children.
- A ratio of one teacher or aide for 24 napping children is permitted, provided the additional staff to meet the "awake" ratios are immediately available at the center.

Based on California Code of Regulations, Title 22 section 101216.3, Ratios and group size are verified through:

- In-person visit for Point Values 3 through 5 (checked during the ERS assessment)
- Self-report in portfolio and certified through portfolio certification process

How to handle out-of-ratio and child endangerment is a local decision. The California Child Abuse Reporting Law must be followed (Penal Code Sections 11165-11174.3).

Ratio and group size scores will be reported as follows:

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

As with the 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 value of 3

Preschool Room A point value of 2

Preschool Room B point value of 3

Preschool Room C point value of 2

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

$$14 \div 5 = 2.8$$

**Overall points for ratio/group size = 2**

### Core 3: Program and Environment

#### Element 6. Environment

##### **1 POINT**

**Indicator:** Not Required

**Detail:** Child Observation and Assessment is not required at Common Tier 1/BLOCK. Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive one point for this element.

##### **2 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Familiarity with ERS and every classroom uses ERS as a part of a Quality Improvement Plan

**Detail:** *Familiarity with ERS* can 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. The decision about what constitutes familiarity is a local one.

##### **3 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Assessment on the whole tool.

Results used to inform the program's Quality Improvement Plan.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

**Detail:** Type of assessment is a local decision and may include an external assessment, self-assessment designed by local consortium, or other methods determined locally to enable teachers/sites to review environment quality and set goals for improvement. Requirements for three points should be greater than requirements for two points. Consortia may continue using an external assessor at three points, but a minimum score would not be used for site rating.

### **4 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Independent ERS assessment. All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score of 5.0

**Detail:** Independent (external) assessment is conducted by an entity or persons not part of the program (third-party) who is currently reliable on the tool, including assessments conducted by CDE's trained and reliable assessors.

As with the CLASS and ratio/group size elements, each classroom will be assessed using the appropriate tool for the setting. Each selected classroom is assigned a point value based on the ERS score. Points for assessed classrooms are averaged for the site rating. The decimal is dropped and the whole number is reported as the site's points for this element.

Individual classroom scores are calculated by adding item scores and averaging by the total number of items.

Classroom	Classroom ERS Score	Classroom Points	Points average	Total Element 6 Points
A	5.37	4	4.67	4
B	5.63	5		
C	5.50	5		

In classrooms with multiple age groups, use the age level tool appropriate for the majority of children. If children are equally distributed, consult the State Master Anchors for advice.

### **5 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Independent ERS assessment. All subscales completed and averaged to meet overall score of 5.5

**OR**

Current National Accreditation approved by the California Department of Education

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

**Detail:** See Point Value 4 Detail for requirements of independent assessment.

National Accreditation may be used to satisfy the Point Value 5 criteria as an alternative to achieving a minimum ERS scale score of 5.5. Currently, National Accreditation at Point Value 5 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.

The rated site has the option to choose to earn five points through either independent assessment or national accreditation.

### Core 3: Program and Environment

#### Element 7. Director Qualifications (Centers Only)

##### **1 POINT**

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

##### **2 POINTS**

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

**OR**

Master Teacher Permit

##### **3 POINTS**

**Indicator:** 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 PD annually

##### **4 POINTS**

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

**OR**

Program Director Permit **AND**

21 hours PD annually

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

### **5 POINTS**

**Indicator:** Master's degree with 30 units' core ECE/CD including specialized courses, 8 units of management/ administration

**OR**

Administrative Credential **AND**

21 hours PD annually

### **DETAILS (POINTS 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5)**

Sites licensed and in good standing with Community Care Licensing or legally license exempt and eligible for participation will automatically receive one point for this element.

*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.”

Method to verify 21 hours of professional development is a local consortium decision.

## **QCC Consortium Implementation Guide**

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.

For Point Values 2 through 5, 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).

## Glossary

**Age groups** are defined by QCC as:

- Infants – Birth through 17 months, or as defined by the assessment tool
- Toddlers – 18 through 35 months, or as defined by the assessment tool
- Preschool – 36 months through kindergarten entry, or as defined by the assessment tool

**Ages and Stages Questionnaire® (ASQ)** is a series of 19 parent-completed questionnaires designed to screen the developmental performance of children in the areas of communication, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, problem solving, personal social skills, and overall development across time. The age-appropriate scale is completed by the parent or caregiver. The items on the scale represent behaviors the child should be able to perform at that age.

**Ages and Stages Questionnaire®: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE)** Modeled after the ASQ, the ASQ: SE is a series of questionnaires about young children’s social and emotional development. Identifying behavior through ASQ:SE-2 paves the way for next steps to helping children reach their fullest potential, such as further assessment or specialized intervention or ongoing monitoring.

**California State Preschool Programs** serve eligible three- and four-year-old children in part-day and full-day services that are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate. The program also provides meals and snacks to children, parent education, referrals to health and social services for families, and staff development opportunities to employees.

**Center director** provides direct on-site supervision and administrative support to teaching staff and children, provides ongoing communication with public and private agencies, and support to families in an early care setting with at least one classroom. For additional clarification, see the Detail section under Element 7 in this guide.

**Certified CLASS® observer** is a person who has attended a CLASS Observation Training and who has passed a CLASS Reliability Test within the past year. A Certified CLASS Observer has demonstrated a solid understanding of the CLASS tool and is qualified to code classrooms using the CLASS observation tool.

**Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS®)** is an observation tool designed by the University of Virginia to measure the quality of classroom processes and teacher-child interactions.

**CLASS Affiliate Trainer** receives certification through Teachstone, LLC. Certification is given to trainers who pass reliability on the CLASS tool and participate in Teachstone’s Train-the-Trainer program. These trainers should be able to produce a certificate

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

indicating that they successfully completed the Train-the-Trainer program along with a certificate demonstrating their current reliability on the CLASS tool (must be renewed annually). Certification is specific to each CLASS tool and its associated age group.

**CLASS observation**, also known as a CLASS assessment, is conducted by a Certified CLASS Observer.

**Classroom** is defined for the purpose of the QCC as:

- One teaching team using the same physical classroom space and working with the same age group.
- A group of children under a single teaching team. A classroom may be full-day or half-day. The definition of “group=classroom” in half-day morning and afternoon preschool is based on the consistency of the teaching team and consistency of the ages of children served.

### **Core 8 courses:**

1. Child Growth and Development
2. Child, Family, and Community
3. Introduction to Curriculum
4. Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
5. Observation and Assessment
6. Health, Safety, and Nutrition
7. Teaching in a Diverse Society
8. Practicum

**Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)** is a child observational assessment (not inclusive of the Desired Results for Children and Families – Parent Survey (optional)).

**Desired Results Access** supports special educators, administrators, and families in implementing the California Department of Education’s Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP (2015)) for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who have an IFSP or IEP

**DRDP Online** creates psychometrically valid reports for teachers and also meets the QCC requirements of state-level data.

**Early learning site** An early learning site is operated by an administration or entity at one physical location. If two administrations/entities are operating on the same site and are operating separately from one another (e.g., co-located), each is counted as a separate site.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

**Evidence-based child assessment/observation tool** provides the level of evidence to support the generality of a practice as indicated by research. Evidence may come from empirical evidence, through evaluation reports by an outside source or the developer, or by consensus documents published by a professional organization.

**Familiarity with CLASS** refers to the participating program's management, center director, family child care operator, and lead teacher, as appropriate, having a basic understanding of the CLASS assessment tool. This can include having attended overview orientations, webinars, training, college courses in which the tool was presented, or other forms of knowing the intent, purpose, and use of the tool, but not to the depth of completing observations.

**Familiarity with ERS** refers to the participating program's management, center director, family child care operator, and lead teacher, as appropriate, having a basic understanding of the relevant ERS assessment tool.

**Group of children** are children who are assigned for most of the day to a specific teacher or a team of teaching staff members and who occupy an individual classroom or well-defined space in a center. For FCCH, the number of children who are enrolled in the FCCH.

**Head Start/Early Head Start** are federally funded programs promoting school readiness of children under the age of five years from low-income families through education, nutrition, health, social, and other services.

**In good standing** refers to a licensed child care center or family child care home that currently does not have any of the following: (1) a non-compliance conference; (2) an administrative action taken or in the process of being taken (includes denied application, denied exemption, temporary suspension order, expedited revocation action, revocation action, or exclusion action that is being initiated, in process, or already taken); and (3) a probationary license. (See Health and Safety Code Sections 1596.773 and 1596.886.)

**Lead Teacher** is the adult with primary responsibility for a group of children. For the purposes of rating an early childhood classroom, lead teacher is the adult who meets the minimum licensing requirements as a teacher and any additional requirements for the point-level of the rating. When there is more than one teacher working in a group, the lead teacher shall be considered the person with the highest degree.

**Participating sites** are licensed centers, family child care homes, and license-exempt settings. Priority is given to participating programs that are serving children with high needs.

**Professional Development** refers to 21 hours of professional development or continuing education per year, consistent with the professional growth activities described in the Commission on Teacher Credentialing Child Development Permit Professional Growth Manual ([http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/manuals-handbooks/PG\\_Manual\\_ChildDev.pdf](http://www.ctc.ca.gov/credentials/manuals-handbooks/PG_Manual_ChildDev.pdf)), pages 8 & 9.

## QCC Consortium Implementation Guide

**Points** in QCC are based on sites' level of implementation of each quality element.

**Program works with families** means families are engaged in the screening process. The 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 the local Regional Center, school district, and/or other resources.

**Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)** is a “method to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early care and education settings”<sup>3</sup>.

**Regional Coordination and Training and Technical Assistance Hubs** (Hubs) are developed for consortia participating in First 5 IMPACT and QCC. The primary focus of the Hubs is to provide coordination and specialized support to consortia within a region or with similar technical assistance needs to create economies of scale while building a local early learning system. As a regional body, the Hubs are required to:

- Help consortia identify local and regional strengths and assets, and determine local and regional gaps and needs
- Coordinate regional data collection and activities to implement the QCC elements and Systems Functions
- Reduce regional duplication of efforts
- Build local and regional expertise, and incorporate state and federal evidence-based practices models
- Maintain a strong connection to the QCC

**Related Field** refers to Education, Human Development, or a similar unit-based course that may be counted as a “child development related field” when a “substantial” amount of the coursework is focused on young children ages 0-5. QCC defers to the CTC and the Workforce Registry to determine whether coursework qualifies as a related field.

**Reliable CLASS observer** is an individual who has demonstrated their ability to observe and rate classrooms based on the CLASS quality indicators.

**Teaching team** consists of the same group of teachers over time.

**Valid and reliable child assessment/observation tool** refers to any assessment or tool whereby implementation from one time to the next and from one observer/implementer to the next is likely to yield the same results (reliability), and the instrument or tool measures what it says it measures in the defined audience or group (validity). Often, instrument validity is limited to a specific language, culture, or age group.