



Justice
Juvenile Justice

Juvenile Justice Centres Continuous Improvement Quality Assurance Framework Policy

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

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1. Introduction

The Juvenile Justice Continuous Improvement Quality Assurance Framework (JJCIQAF) was introduced in 2008. The Framework is underpinned by legislation namely under Section 7(3) of the *Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987*, which mandates inspection of detention centres followed by a report on the following:

- physical, psychological and emotional well being of detainees
- social, cultural and educational development of detainees
- general control and management of the detention centre
- morale, conduct and functions of persons employed in the detention centre
- condition of the premises (including grounds, buildings, furniture, equipment and amenities) of the detention centre, and
- security of the detention centre.

The Framework was reviewed in 2012/2013 by Internal Audit Bureau (IAB) with NSW JJ accepting all IAB recommendations which were implemented in 2013. The implementation of the IAB recommendations has resulted in an evidence based quality focused quality assurance process. The current JJCIQAF exemplifies a model of good practice with a major focus on assessing quality.

The purpose of the JJQAF is to encourage a culture of continuous quality improvement within Juvenile Justice. The framework encompasses a rigorous process that involves 4 phases: self-assessment, annual review, improvement review and progress review for custody. The Quality Assurance model in NSW Juvenile Justice is in line with international good practice (Integrated Management System International Standard (ISO 9001 and ISO 9004)¹.

The Australian Juvenile Justice Administrators (AJJA) Juvenile Justice Standards 2009 were adopted and incorporated into the JJQAF in 2009. The Framework is also underpinned by the new AJJA Principles of Youth Justice in Australia 2014.

1.1. Quality Assurance Process

The Division's quality assurance process involves measuring and improving service delivery, stakeholder relationships and client satisfaction.

The review process involves:

- peer review assessment of performance indicators linked to legislation, policies and procedures
- surveys of young people in detention and on community supervision

¹ International Organisation for Standardisation <http://www.iso.org/iso/home.html>

- staff surveys
- focus groups with young people and staff
- interviews with non-government agencies
- interviews with Official Visitors and Chaplains
- self-assessment of centre/community practices
- informal and formal discussions with staff and clients
- direct observations
- showcase of good practice
- inspections of detention centre environments

All of the above quality assurance processes are tools that provide important information about:

- quality of service delivery to young people, specifically how it assists in reducing re-offending
- areas in which improvements are required
- additional staff training requirements
- need for review of Juvenile Justice policy and procedures and gaps in systems and controls

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to express the fundamental intent and direction for quality assurance in NSW Juvenile Justice Centres. The policy specifies the Division's commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement as well as its principles, features and processes.

In addition, the purpose of the quality assurance policy is to enhance the effectiveness of Division practice and to continuously improve the services provided to client, their families, visitors and other stakeholders.

3. Scope

The Continuous Improvement Quality Assurance policy and principles apply to all staff who work in juvenile justice centres because successful implementation of this policy requires involvement of all staff in juvenile justice centres.

To achieve and maintain the required level of quality assurance the Executive Director State-Wide Operations retains responsibility for Quality Assurance with all associated functions administered by the Operations Unit.

4. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to communicate the Division's position regarding Quality Assurance including:

- Maintenance of an effective Quality Assurance System complying with legislation and AJJA Standards 2009.
- Achievement and maintenance of a level of quality which enhances Division practice.
- Ensuring compliance with relevant statutory and safety requirements.
- Ensuring that the quality of practice in centres meets the standards expected the legislation and stakeholders including the community.
- Provision of guidance in identifying internal and external standards and criteria consistent with nationally/internationally recognized standards.
- Facilitation and development of a culture of continuous quality improvement

5. Continuous Improvement Quality Assurance (CIQA) Framework

5.1. Principles Underpinning the Policy

Several key principles are incorporated into this Policy. The principles relate to the quality framework and processes outlined in this document.

Principle 1: The framework and processes are dynamic and strive for continuous quality improvement.

Principle 2: The framework and processes build on and improve the current internal quality assurance activities.

Principle 3: The framework and processes are transparent and systematic.

Principle 4: Ownership of the framework and processes is devolved to the responsible Centre Manager.

Principle 5: The system and processes are subjected to regular assessment and review.

5.2. Features of the CIQA Framework

A deliberate focus based on the principles of Continuous Improvement, which actively involves management and staff, to build an internal culture of continuous quality improvement, thus strengthening ownership at the local level.

- It augments the Division's risk management strategies.

- It is a single quality assurance review framework.
- It ensures quality assurance reviews are conducted to determine the extent to which Juvenile Justice Centres meet the Division policy and procedures, within the framework of the Australasian Juvenile Justice Standards 2009.
- It enables the integration of quality improvement processes into existing centre structures.
- Consists of processes where quality assurance and continual improvement are directly linked to Division's strategic plan.
- A continuous process that incorporates Division wide sharing of outcomes from local quality improvement initiatives.
- It empowers both staff and management in the quality assurance process resulting in ownership of solutions to quality improvements.
- The establishment of a 'Continuous Improvement Team' in each Centre.
- Recognition of Centres for areas of 'Good Practice'.

5.3. Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) in Juvenile Justice Centres

A continuous quality improvement process offers centre staff an opportunity to consider the nature of current practice against standards through identified performance indicators. Once the level of practice is established an opportunity exists to develop and continually monitor interventions aimed at improving quality.

For an effective CQI the following must occur:

- Development of clear and achievable goals;
- Quantifying change processes in place;
- Developing alternative ideas to current practice; and
- Maintaining an ability to test real changes on a small scale and to make further adjustments accordingly.

5.4. Principles of CQI

Leadership

It is crucial that the CQI program be led by staff with a shared vision of a system undergoing continuous improvement.

Detainee Focus

It is important to keep in mind the socio demographic characteristics of the young people in our Centres, and to establish and maintain open communication with them.

Empowerment of staff

Achieving quality improvement relies on the enthusiastic participation of management and staff. Staff who work within the system are the best source of information about weaknesses in the system.

Teamwork fostering a team spirit raises enthusiasm as well as sharing the workload and improving morale.

Quality first there is no excuse for not implementing quality improvement.

Focus on practice not individual.

The emphasis is on the current processes of work practice rather than individuals, this is a fundamental principle of CQI.

Risk management

Finding areas in the system that present a risk to the Division by observing practice, allows prevention rather than correction of adverse outcomes.

5.5. CQI and Evidence Based Practice

The process of continuous quality improvement and the introduction of evidence-based practice go hand in hand. As quality improvement encourages staff to monitor and improve their performance, it requires both organisational support and an understanding of what represents 'Good Practice'; therefore CQI depends on 'evidence' to determine outcomes.

5.6. Quality Assurance/ Improvement Reviews

5.6.1. Structure

The Quality Review Framework is underpinned by:

- Section 7(3), of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987
- Juvenile Justice Policies and Procedures, and
- Executive Memoranda.

5.6.2. Documentation and Tools

- The Department of Juvenile Justice Quality Assurance Logic Framework
- The Department of Juvenile Justice Quality Assurance Process Flowchart
- Section 7 of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987
- AJJA Standards 2009
- AJJA principles 2014
- Qualitative outcome criteria to measure performance in the form of performance indicators
- Centre Self-Assessment Reports
- Continuous Improvement Plans
- The Annual Review Team's Quality Assurance Annual Report

5.6.3. Stakeholders

- the Executive Committee

- Centre Managers
- centre management
- Centre Continuous Improvement Team
- employees
- young people
- the Operations Unit
- the Annual Review Team
- Regional Directors
- Director Operations Unit
- the Quality Assurance Team, Operations Unit

5.6.4. Centre stakeholder participation and engagement.

All stakeholders are responsible for maintaining continual staff engagement by providing:

- commitment of resources
- structures / mechanisms to keep the quality improvement cycle turning e.g. The Centre Continuous Improvement Team
- clear explanations of quality focus
- ownership of the process to all staff
- open communication, and
- leadership.

6. Quality Assurance Processes

Quality Assurance Reviews consist of four phases:

- Self-assessment,
- Annual Review,
- Improvement Review and
- Progress review.

These processes are explained in the Continuous Improvement Quality Assurance Guide document.

6.1. Performance Indicators

The Central Office QA Team has developed qualitative performance indicators (i.e. clear criteria) against which self-assessments will be validated. Performance indicators are based on Division policies and procedures and are aligned to the Australasian Juvenile Justice Administrators Standards 2009. Performance indicators are one tool to help answer the question: How do you know whether you are achieving the outcomes as specified in NSW JJ policies and procedures?

6.2. Time frame

For effective delivery, the Continuous Improvement Quality Assurance Framework is based on a twelve (12) months cycle consisting of the four phases outlined above.

6.3. Scoring Methodology

Performance indicators are rated based on whether local programs policies, procedures and practices are in accordance with Juvenile Justice Policies, Procedures, Legislation and Executive Memoranda.

To enable the review to highlight levels of work practice, and to accurately quantify performance, a four layered, scoring system (A, B, C and D) is utilised with rankings.

Note: Rankings are explained in depth in the Guide document.

7. Definitions

Word/Term	Definitions
Division	NSW Juvenile Justice is a Division of Department of Attorney General & Justice
Continuous Improvement Quality assurance (or quality improvement, performance improvement, or similar activities)	<p>A quality philosophy that assumes further improvements are always possible and that processes should be continuously re-evaluated and improvements implemented</p> <p>The belief that an organisation must constantly measure the effectiveness of its processes and strive to meet objectives to satisfy stakeholders</p> <p>Continuous improvement is defined as an ongoing effort to improve services, or processes. These efforts can seek "incremental" improvement over time or "breakthrough" improvement all at once. Delivery (customer valued) processes are constantly evaluated and improved in the light of their efficiency, effectiveness and flexibility.</p>
Self - assessment	<p>Self-assessment involves an organisation looking at how it does things, what it achieves and how it measures up against criteria. During the process, an organisation's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement are identified.</p> <p>Self-assessment is an opportunity for JJ to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confirm areas where the service is meeting the standards • identify gaps in current systems and processes that do not meet the standards • plan actions to address any identified gaps in systems and

Word/Term	Definitions
	<p>processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify additional opportunities for improvement, to support continuous improvement.
Assessment	refers to a process of organising and analysing information in order to determine compliance in regards to legislative requirements.
Centre/s:	refers to NSW Juvenile Justice Detention Centre/s.
Staff	refers to people employed in centres by Juvenile Justice on a permanent, temporary or casual basis.
Continuous Improvement Team (CIT)	refers to a group of selected staff members in each centre, who will be responsible for organising, assessing and measuring the centres work practices against standard indicators.
Division	refers to the New South Wales Juvenile Justice.
Rankings	refers to four descriptions that allow the centre staff to indicate what level they assess the centre's performance to be in line with.
Framework	<p>refers to Juvenile Justice Quality Assurance /Improvement Logic framework which provides stakeholders with a 'road map' describing the sequence of related events connecting planned programming to desired outcomes. The Logic framework also defines the domains within which performance indicators are identified.</p> <p>#See Appendix 1 JJ Quality Assurance / Improvement Logic Framework</p>
Continuous Improvement Plans (CIPs)	refers to a generic formatted plan that indicates the actions a centre will follow to improve practice. The plan includes responsibilities, planned completion dates and further actions.
Improvement reviews	refers to two reviews held three months after the annual and progress reviews to allow centres to present improvement towards 'Good Practice' performance levels.
Indicators	give descriptions of practice/procedure to be assessed.
Self-Assessment Reports (SAR)	refers to a generic formatted report that assists the Centre's CIT to conduct and complete self-assessments of work practices. Indicators and evidence required is documented on the reports.

Word/Term	Definitions
Best practice	is usually related to process performance management. It's a way of benchmarking. It's quite easy to measure and judge (e.g. quantitative measures are generally used such as percentage of, number of etc.).
Good practice	<p>Good practice principles (partnerships, evidence-based interventions, transparency, accountability, sustainability, resources) reflect values that encourage effectiveness in practice to meet the needs of a client group. Alternatively, best practice principles suggest there is a single approach to which practice must comply.</p> <p>The good practice principles may also be used to inform the evaluation of proposed or existing programs.</p>

8. References

Procedure	Juvenile Justice Quality Assurance Guidance Operations Manual
Policy	Relevant policies in the Operations Manual
Forms	Performance Indicator (word) worksheets Continuous Improvement Plans Staff and Detainee Surveys
Resources	Juvenile Justice Quality Assurance Guidance Operations Manual
Legislation	<p>The requirement for a quality assurance process is embedded in:</p> <p>1. Legislation under Section 7(3) of the <i>Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987</i>, which mandates quarterly inspections of detention centres followed by a report on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The physical, psychological and emotional well being of detainees; • The social, cultural and educational development of detainees; • The general control and management of the detention centre; • The morale, conduct and functions of persons

	<p>employed in the detention centre;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The condition of the premises (including grounds, buildings, furniture, equipment and amenities) of the detention centre; and • The security of the detention centre. <p>2. United Nations Conventions</p> <p>Australia is a signatory to several international conventions that have a bearing on this policy. Parties who are signatories to international conventions are required by the appropriate United Nations body to report regularly on implementation and observation of these instruments.</p> <p>Juvenile Justice has an obligation to acknowledge these conventions and be mindful of providing services to young people that comply with the principles noted in the conventions. Staff should be aware of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CROC) • United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty • United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (Beijing Rules) • United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (The Riyadh Guidelines) <p>3. AJJA Standards (2009)</p>
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8. Version Control and Change History

Version Control	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment
1		K. Harris	First Version
2			