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**NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK – SCHOOL AGE CARE SECTOR
RESPONSE.**

The National Out of School Hours Services Association (NOSHSA) has welcomed today the approval by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs of the Education and Care Services National Regulations. “This is an important step in the continued development of high quality children’s services in Australia” said NOSHSA spokesperson Robyn Monro-Miller.

The development and introduction of the National Quality Framework has been a cooperative effort between all governments, the education and care sector and the community. NOSHSA has maintained an active interest in the development of the system and the inclusion of the framework.

The inclusion of a specific framework for school age care “My Time, Our Place” will assist in ensuring the National Quality Framework takes into account the fundamental differences in service provision between early and middle childhood services in play based learning environments.

One of the key changes proposed under the National Quality Framework is the introduction of a National Quality Standard. NOSHSA is concerned that the new system has not addressed the provision of standard national qualifications and ratios for school age care services across Australia.

“ This omission will mean that there are still Outside School Hours Care services in Australia that are not required to meet any mandatory qualifications and ratios.”

“It is hard to ensure a single national platform of quality for Outside School Hours Care Services when each state and territory has different minimum ratio and qualifications requirements for school age care – and in some cases like NSW, no minimum requirements” said Ms Monro- Miller.

NOSHSA looks forward to working with ACECQA and DEEWR to undertake the necessary research to establish appropriate qualifications and ratios for school age care services consistently across Australia.

The National Quality Framework commences on 1 January 2012 and will cover most long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschool services.

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