This document intends to answer some of the most frequently asked questions practitioners and managers might have, concerning the qualification requirements for practitioners working within the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets out the standards for learning development and care for children from birth to five. The EYFS also sets out the qualification requirements for the staff working with children in early years provision in maintained schools, non-maintained schools, independent schools, all providers on the Early Years Register, and all providers registered with an early years childminder agency.

Further information on the Statutory Framework for the EYFS can be found [here](#).

This document will cover the following questions:

- **What are the EYFS requirements for staff qualifications?**
- **What is a full and relevant qualification?**
- **How to check if the qualification is full and relevant?**
- **Do I need to have GCSE Maths and English to count in staff:child ratios?**
- **Can I be included in the staff:child ratios at a level 3 in a nursery or preschool setting with a Level 3 Award in Preparing to Work in Home Based Childcare?**
- **How to check if overseas qualification is the full and relevant?**
- **Can staff be counted within the staff:child ratios with an overseas qualification?**
- **I have a non-full and relevant degree qualification at level 6, what qualification would I need to gain to be counted within the staff:child ratios?**
- **I am currently studying on the graduate employment based route of the Early Years Initial Teacher Training, can I be counted within the staff:child ratios whilst studying?**
What are the EYFS requirements for staff qualifications?

Staff qualification requirements are defined in section 3 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage is as follows:

**Group settings:**

"3.23. In group settings, the manager must hold at least a full and relevant \(^{16}\) level 3 \(^{17}\) qualification and at least half of all other staff must hold at least a full and relevant level 2 qualification. The manager should have at least two years’ experience of working in an early years setting, or have at least two years’ other suitable experience. The provider must ensure there is a named deputy who, in their judgement, is capable and qualified to take charge in the manager’s absence."

**For Childminders:**

"3.24. Childminders must have completed training which helps them to understand and implement the EYFS before they can register with Ofsted or a childminder agency. Childminders are accountable for the quality of the work of any assistants, and must be satisfied that assistants are competent in the areas of work they undertake."

The information detailed above and more on the Statutory Framework for the EYFS can be found [here](#).

What is a full and relevant qualification?

The term full and relevant means the qualification in question has been mapped to a standardised set of criteria specifically designed for working within the EYFS.

The National College for Teaching and Leadership is responsible for maintain the existing qualifications list.

The criteria used to map existing qualifications are:

1. Demonstrate depth and level of learning appropriate to specified outcomes of full early years, childcare or playwork qualifications.
2. Demonstrate it has valid, reliable assessment and awarding procedures.
3. Include an element of assessed performance evidence.

To see the full criteria in more details please see the following link: [http://www.education.gov.uk/eypqd/criteria.shtml](http://www.education.gov.uk/eypqd/criteria.shtml)
How to check if the qualification is full and relevant?

The Early Years Qualification List has been defined and maintained by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL).

To check if your qualification is considered full and relevant you can check The Early Years Qualification List. You will need to know if the qualification you are checking was completed either before or after 1 September 2014. You are then able to search by the qualification title in full or just using key words, by awarding organisation, or level.

There is an array of childcare qualifications on the Early Years Qualification List, which have been mapped according to the set criteria. The criteria is set by the NCTL and is available to view here.

When conducting your search you will find it helpful to have some key information about the qualification you are looking for, such as full title and awarding body as well as qualification level.

Do I need to have GCSE Maths and English to count in staff:child ratios?

In March 2017 the Government announced their response to the issues concerning the GCSE English and Maths requirement for all Level 3 Early Educator qualifications along with confirmation of the Early Years Workforce Strategy.

Annex B of the Literacy and Numeracy qualification Requirements for level 3 Early Years Educator staff Government consultation response document, shows a list of suitable level 2 literacy and numeracy qualifications. Details of the acceptable level 2 qualifications in literacy and numeracy have been listed below.

**English**

- Functional Skills qualification in English at Level 2
- GCSE/International GCSE qualification in English Language and/or Literature to at least grade C (grade 4).
- Key Skills qualification in Literacy at Level 2
- A’ Level or AS Level qualification in English Language and/or English Literature to at least grade E
- O’ Level qualification in English to at least grade C.
- CSE grade 1 English (Language)

*Also Recognised Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh equivalents.*

**Mathematics**

- Functional Skills qualification in Mathematics at Level 2
- GCSE/International GCSE qualification in Mathematics to at least grade C (grade 4)
- Key Skills qualification in Application of Number at Level 2
- A’ Level or AS Level qualification in Mathematics or Pure Mathematics and/or Further Mathematics to at least grade E
- O’ Level qualification in Mathematics to at least grade C.
Qualifications, working within the early years foundation stage and frequently asked questions

- CSE grade 1 Mathematics

Also Recognised Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh equivalent

With effect from the 3 April 2017 the GCSE English and Maths requirement will be extended to include functional skills in literacy and numeracy. This change applies to anyone who is currently studying or has already gained the qualification since 1 September 2014.

Can I be included in the staff:child ratios at a level 3 in a nursery or preschool setting with a Level 3 Award in Preparing to Work in Home Based Childcare?

The Level 3 Award in Preparing to Work in Home Based Childcare is a specific Award for those working as a Childminder. It is not considered as a full and relevant qualification according to the Early Years Qualifications List, therefore practitioner holding this qualification would be unable to be counted in the staff:child ratios at level 3.

The Level 3 Award in Preparing to Work in Home Based Childcare consists of two mandatory units and 50 Guided learning hours. Please follow this link to the CACHE Level 3 Award in Preparing to Work in Home Based Childcare Pdf for further information.

In contrast the Level 3 Early Years Education and Care (Early Years Educator) consists of 27 mandatory units and 691 guided learning hours. Please follow this link to the Level 3 Early Years Education and Care (Early Years Educator) Pdf for further information.

How can I check if an overseas qualification is the full and relevant?

For any qualifications achieved overseas you will need to contact UK NARIC and request a bespoke Statement of Comparability for the Early Years Sector (SOCEYS). When the application is made for a SOCEYS statement, UK NARIC will provide an assessment of the comparable level of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). The qualification will then be assessed against the NCTL full and relevant criteria for either a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification.

There is a £100 fee for this service offered by UK NARIC, however the SOCEYS is yours to keep like any formal qualification certificate and can be used as evidence for any future job applications.

http://ecctis.co.uk/naric/Individuals/Default.aspx
Qualifications, working within the early years foundation stage and frequently asked questions

Can staff be counted within the staff:child ratios with an overseas qualification?

This depends on the outcome of the Statement of Comparability for the Early Years Sector (SOCEYS) from UK NARIC. See the question, How to check if overseas qualification is the full and relevant? For further information

I have a non-full and relevant degree qualification at level 6, what qualification would I need to gain to be counted within the staff:child ratios?

This depends on the longer term aspirations.

You could consider the graduate employment based route of the Early Years Teacher status (EYTS).

If you do not wish to gain the EYTS, do not already hold a full and relevant level 3 qualification and wish to be counted within the ratios at a level 3, then undertaking the Early Educator qualification is advisable provided you hold both GCSE Maths and English at grade C or higher.

I am currently studying on the graduate employment based route of the Early Years Initial Teacher Training, can I be counted within the staff:child ratios whilst studying?

This is at the discretion of the setting manager and Ofsted at the time of inspection. Section 3.29 Staff:child ratios, of the Statutory Framework for the early years foundation stage states:

“3.29. Only those aged 17 or over may be included in ratios (and staff under 17 should be supervised at all times). Students on long term placements and volunteers (aged 17 or over) and staff working as apprentices in early education (aged 16 or over) may be included in the ratios if the provider is satisfied that they are competent and responsible.”


If you have any questions concerning the qualification you or a member of your staff team hold that have not already been answered, please contact: Practice Improvement team ipre.h.practice.improvement@westsussex.gov.uk or telephone the Family Information Service on 01243 777807.