NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

Factsheet: NDIS Registration Process and Audit Pathways

To be a registered provider of NDIS supports and services, means applying for and maintaining registration with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission). This factsheet provides information and links to other resources on:

- **The Registration Process**
- **Audit Pathways**
- **The Audit Process**
- **Quality Auditor Recommendations**
- **Application Outcome and Ongoing Cycle**

This resource is aimed at providers who are new to the provision of NDIS supports and services. The information in this resource is general in nature and is a starting point. It should be used and adapted to meet the size and scope of your organisation and the supports you provide.

The Registration Process

Registration is the process taken by the NDIS Commission to assess a provider's suitability to provide supports and services. They do this by:

- looking at the organisation, their history and their key personnel; and
- auditing against the NDIS Practice Standards.

To be a registered provider with the NDIS Commission, you will need to:

1. Apply online via the NDIS Commission portal and complete a self-assessment - See NDIS Commission - Applying for registration.

> **3 tips on completing the self-assessment:**
> - **Think about the key information you want to provide** – only approximately 300-word responses are allowed.
> - **Check your documentation is the latest version,** and is not outdated or incomplete.
> - **Upload the key documents** you refer to as part of your evidence.

2. Undertake a third-party audit (certification or verification) against the NDIS Practice Standards (Practice Standards) - See NDIS Commission - Understanding what is involved in an audit.
3. Have your suitability assessed by the NDIS Commission.
4. Receive an outcome from the NDIS Commission.
5. Meet your registration requirements ongoing by complying with the Practice Standards and Code of Conduct.
6. Undertake a mid-term audit (certification only) 18 months after registration.
7. Renew your registration every 3 years.

Detailed information on these steps can be found in the NDIS Commission resource: Registration requirements, process and timeline. The NDIS Commission have also produced a Video explaining provider registration: Understanding Provider Registration.

Part of the process of applying for registration is selecting the supports and services you will be delivering. **Be clear which registration groups you want to provide services under -** the supports and services you select, will be the supports and services you are audited against so consider this carefully. Once you start the process online, you will have up to 60 days to complete.

New providers – If you are wanting to become a registered provider you will need to register for a new account - called a PRODA account - in order to start the application process. For further information see https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/portal/apply-registration.

Existing registered providers – If you are already a registered provider, you can begin to apply to renew your registration **six months or less before the renewal date** listed on your certificate of registration. You must apply before this date expires or your registration could lapse.

Audit Pathways

There are 2 possible audit pathways a provider can go through, depending on the supports and services you are or will be delivering.

Verification Pathway	Certification Pathway
A **verification audit** is generally completed for providers who offer services considered low risk.	A **certification audit** is completed for providers who offer supports and services considered as high risk or more complex.
Most commonly this pathway is for providers who are already subject to professional regulation, such as Allied Health professionals who are registered through APRHA and other professional bodies who provide regulatory oversight.	In a certification audit, providers are assessed against the NDIS Practice Standards Core Module and any other supplementary modules relevant to the supports they deliver.

To help with your decision, use this document to check the registration groups your organisation provides: NDIS Commission - Registration requirements supports and services.

Scope of Audit

Once you have completed your application online, you should receive an **initial scope of audit.** This is sent automatically as an attachment by email once the self-assessment has been submitted on the NDIS Commission's portal.

The email and/or attachment may not be titled as scope of audit – it's important to always review **any** emails you receive from the NDIS Commission.

The scope of audit is generated automatically based on the information provided in your registration application on the portal.

Next choose your preferred Approved Quality Auditor (AQA) and plan your audit with them. For information and tips on choosing your Auditor, see **NDS Selecting and engaging an Approved Quality Auditor (AQA).**

The Audit Process

There are some similarities and some differences in the audit process for verification and certification pathways.

For both pathways, some of the work will be completed remotely - via a desktop audit - to review documents, systems, policies, procedures and plans.

Discuss with your quality auditor how you will provide access to these documents. Some options include:

- Providing the quality auditor with limited access to systems where documents are kept and maintained.
- Sending documents via email.
- Uploading documents to a cloud-based folder.

Sometimes the quality auditors will specify the documents they require prior to the audit date. Other times they will expect you to know what documents you have that demonstrate you are following the Practice Standards and provide these.

To facilitate access to the documents quickly and efficiently, consider:

- how this will be managed to maintain high standards of confidentiality; and
- who will be the key people involved to ensure you have all the documents easily accessible prior to the audit date.

The tables below highlight the differences in the audit process for verification and certification.

Verification Pathway
The verification audit is a **Stage One audit** only which is generally completed remotely. **Stage One Audit** The quality auditor will review the self-assessment and any attachments uploaded to the NDIS Commission's portal. As the number of documents which can be uploaded to the NDIS Commission's portal is limited, the auditor may request additional policies, procedures and documents to assist in determining if the provider meets the NDIS Practice Standards and the associated quality indicators. For more information including the documentation required for a Verification Audit: NDIS Practice standards verification module required documentation.

Certification Pathway

The certification audit comprises of a **Stage One** and **Stage Two audit.**

Stage One Audit

The Stage One audit is generally completed remotely.

The quality auditor will review your self-assessment and any attachments uploaded to the NDIS Commission's portal. The quality auditor may request additional policies, procedures and documents to assist in determining if the provider meets the Practice Standards and the associated quality indicators.

The quality auditor should provide the stage one audit report within the following timelines:

- **If no non-conformities were identified**, a minimum of one week prior to the commencement of the stage two audit.
- **If any non-conformities were identified** or the audit team suspects they are likely to be found, a minimum of two weeks before the commencement of the stage two audit.

Tip: For definitions of non-conformities – see **NDS Audit Reports resource.**

Stage Two Audit

Within three months of the completion of the Stage One audit, the Stage Two audit should start.

The purpose of the Stage Two audit is to ensure that the Practice Standards are implemented. The purpose is also to understand if the experience of people with disability who use your services and their support networks, reflects the policies, procedures and practices of the organisation.

Stage Two audits generally occur onsite, wherever possible. Exemptions can be requested for situations in which an onsite visit may not be possible and/or appropriate.

Quality auditors may complete parts of the audit remotely using technology to meet with workers and people with disability. One auditor on the team may also be remote to reduce travel costs. If you are unsure on whether a remote Stage Two audit is permissible for your organisation, ask your AQA or contact the NDIS Commission to confirm.

For more information on the Stage Two Audit and process: Step 4: Certification audit - stage 2 | NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (ndiscommission.gov.au).

Following the completion of the audit, an audit report will be provided which outlines whether the provider complies with each of the NDIS Practice Standards assessed. Each Practice Standard will be issued a rating. For more information on what you might see in an audit report, see **NDS Audit Reports resource.**

Quality Auditor Recommendations

After the audit, a draft of the report is given to the organisation prior to its submission to the NDIS Commission. It is important to review this information as soon as possible and talk to your auditor if you have questions or concerns.

Following the completion of the audit, the quality auditor submits their report to the NDIS Commission. The AQA will make a recommendation on registration. However, the NDIS will make the final decision.

Usual timelines

Verification Pathway	Certification Pathway
The report must be submitted to the NDIS Commission within **14 calendar days of completing the audit.**	The report must be submitted to the NDIS Commission within **28 calendar days of completing the audit.**

Application Outcome and Ongoing Cycle

The NDIS Commission reviews the report from the quality auditor and determines whether the registration application is successful or unsuccessful.

Providers are advised in writing of the outcome and the details of registration are published on the NDIS Commission Provider Register.

If the application is successful, the provider receives a certificate of registration with the registration groups, period of registration and any conditions which must be met to maintain registration. The 3 yearly cycle commences from the date the NDIS Commission makes the decision on your registration. The mid-term audit will be due 18 months from this date (for certification only).

Appealing an Outcome

If the application is not successful, providers can request a review within three months of the decision by contacting the NDIS Commission.

If the application is unsuccessful following the review, providers may seek a review by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal at https://www.aat.gov.au/.

References and resources

NDIS (Approved Quality Auditors Scheme) Guidelines 2018:
https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2020C00100

NDIS Commission webpages

Understanding what is involved in an audit webpage

NDIS Code of Conduct webpage

Applying for registration webpage

Understanding what is involved in an audit webpage

NDIS Practice Standards webpage

Registration requirements, process and timeline webpage .

NDIS Commission resources

Provider Information Pack Resource

NDIS Practice standards verification module required documentation resource

Registration requirements supports and services resource

This project is funded by   Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Communities**