Under the Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011, an approved provider is required to designate an educational leader for each approved education and care service. This applies to:

- Centre-based care - which includes long day care, independent preschools, public preschool units and school age care services; and
- Family day care.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations) do not specify a minimum qualification for this role, how many hours the educational leader must work, or even whether this person must work directly with children.

The only legislative requirement is that the staff record must include the name of the person designated as the educational leader.

The concept of educational leadership is related to the National Quality Standard, element 7.1.4: Provision is made to ensure a suitably qualified and experienced educator or coordinator leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.

The educational leader should therefore have sufficient qualifications, experience and thorough understanding of the relevant approved learning framework to be able to guide the team of educators in their planning and reflection and mentor colleagues in their implementation practices.

The National Regulations deliberately don’t prescribe hours or qualifications, to allow the focus to be on the outcome of educational leadership: to build the capacity of educators to foster positive interactions, experiences and environments that promote children’s learning outcomes across all areas.

This will look different in each service.

For example, the educational leader may implement strategies such as:

- facilitating professional discussion and interrogation of new ideas and research;
- mentoring other educators by leading quality practice;
- talking to families about the educational framework;
- providing feedback and guidance on interactions, planning and assessment documentation;
- working with other professionals, community services and Aboriginal elders; and
- establishing systems across the service to ensure continuity of learning and consistency of practices.

For further guidance, see the web-based resource Developing and Sustaining Pedagogical Leadership www.ecceleadership.org.au