



Assessment Report - Factsheet

Reform Action 6 in the *Building a Better Future Out-of-Home Care Reform in Western Australia* (April 2016) plan requires the streamlining of the adoption and foster carer assessment processes into one pathway. A new combined *Suitability to Foster and/or Adopt Assessment Report* template was implemented for use from March 2017.

The combined assessment report, and amendments to the foster care and adoption assessment manuals to include updated language and policy changes, formed **phase one** of the streamlined pathway process. Interim changes were made to the Adoption Assessment Manual and the Foster Care Assessment Manual to guide those carrying out assessments between March and October 2017.

The assessment report structure aligns to the nationally agreed format for intercountry adoption assessments.

The assessment domains closely align with the existing regulated fostering competencies however are broader, enabling the former adoption competencies to be integrated.

As per the *Children and Community Services Regulations 2006*, the competencies must be demonstrated to be met for approval as a foster carer. All evidence used to demonstrate applicants meet competency one will be recorded under assessment domain one, competency two under assessment domain two, and so forth.

Assessment domain six, "Cultural Responsiveness" has been added in preparation for the introduction of this competency into the regulations in 2018. Whilst not yet a competency, cultural responsiveness has long formed a part of foster care and adoption assessments and is included in this phase.

In **phase two**, from October 2017, a new combined assessment manual will be launched to guide assessors in completing assessments for foster care and adoption.

Phase three in implementing the combined assessment process, from early 2018, will focus on additional tools to assist assessors to address the cultural competency. This phase will also include training for assessors and updates to the assessment manual, informed by evaluation of the Cross-sector Foster Carer Panel and Adoption Application Committee feedback.

