



Charles Sturt
University

Student Guide to Professional
Experience Placement

Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood & Primary)

Faculty of Education: Workplace Learning

2025

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Introduction

Professional experience plays a crucial role in a teacher's journey by enhancing their grasp of educational theory and practice. Through hands-on opportunities, teachers can develop pedagogical strategies, collaborate with colleagues and families, and cater to the diverse learning needs of children. This experience fosters both personal and professional growth, empowering teachers to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world classroom situations with confidence. Collaboration with your supervising teacher is key to your success as a teacher education student. Together, you will design learning experiences that meet the diverse needs of students and follow best practices in education. By working with your supervising teacher to observe, document, and plan, you gain the hands-on experience needed to become an effective, ethical, and reflective educator who meets the Graduate Australian Professional Standards for Teachers.

This hands-on experience will give you practical knowledge and skills essential for your success as a teacher, supporting your ongoing professional development and preparing you to positively impact the lives of your students.

This course guide provides an overview of the professional experience requirements for your Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood & Primary) degree, which are essential for obtaining accreditation and becoming a successful educator.

***Important: Please note.** The professional experience placement subjects you are required to complete, and the days of placement vary, depending on the year you *started* your course. These variances are due to changes in the structure of your course. To find the specific requirements for your cohort, please refer to the following breakdown:

Professional Experience placements for **students commencing their degree 2025 and onwards.**

The Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood & Primary) degree (2025 onwards) requires seven supervised professional experience placements to be undertaken, three in early childhood and four in a primary school setting, to meet external regulations for teaching accreditation:

- **EPT174:** Everyday Language and Literacies: Learning and Practice (4 placement days, in a primary setting K-2)
- **EPT124:** Play and Learning (6 placement days, in an early childhood setting)
- **EPT140:** Professional Experience: Birth – 2-year-olds (15 placement days, in an early childhood setting)
- **EPT334:** Analysing Learning: The Early Years (30 placement days, in an early childhood setting 3 – 5 years)
- **EPT341:** Positive Classroom Climates (6 placement days, in a primary setting 3 - 6)
- **EPT218:** Student Learning and Engagement (20 placement days, in a primary setting K - 2)
- **EPT461:** Final Professional Experience: Consolidating Practice in the Primary Context (30 placement days, in a primary setting Years 3 – 6)

Professional experience placement for **students commencing their degree 2024 and prior:**

The Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood & Primary) degree (2024 and earlier) requires five professional experience placements to be undertaken, three in an early childhood and two in a primary school setting, to meet external regulations for teaching accreditation:

- **EPT124:** Play and Learning (6 placement days, in an early childhood setting)
- **EPT140:** Professional Experience: Birth – 2-year-olds (15 placement days, in an early childhood setting)
- **EPT122:** Professional Experience: 3 – 5 Years (20-day placement in an early childhood setting)
- **EPT127:** English Curriculum: Pedagogies in the Early Years of Learning (7 placement days, one day per week, in a K-2 setting)
- **EPT340:** Professional Experience: 3 - 6 (20-day placement in a primary setting Years 3 - 6)
- **EPT341:** Positive Classroom Climates (6 placement days, in a primary setting 3 - 6)
- **EPT446:** Analysing Learning: The Early Years (25-day placement in an early childhood setting 3 – 5 Years)
- **EPT461:** (replaces EPT452) Final Professional Experience: Consolidating Practice in the Primary Context (30-day placement in a primary setting K - 2)

During professional experience, you will collaborate with your supervising teacher to observe, document and intentionally plan for children’s learning following the pedagogical practices relating to the [Early Years Learning Framework](#) (EYLF), the [National Quality Standards](#) (NQS) for Early Childhood Education and Care, and the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers – Graduate Level](#).

This guide should be read in conjunction with the [Professional Experience Handbook](#) for a comprehensive understanding of all placement requirements undertaken within a Charles Sturt University initial teacher education degree.

Administrative information for students

Applying for placement

To be eligible to undertake workplace learning, students must submit all pre-placement documentation and meet requirements. Failure to do so will result in not being allocated a placement or having self-selected placements rejected. These pre-placement requirements are in place to ensure the safety of everyone involved in placements and are mandated by the University and other external regulatory bodies.

It is the responsibility of the professional Workplace Learning (WPL) team to source all placements for teacher education students. **Under no circumstances are you permitted to approach services/schools requesting placements, or to enter into agreements with services/schools regarding future placements.** A student organised placement will not be permitted and could potentially result in an unsatisfactory grade.

To prepare for your placement it is essential that you log into the [InPlace](#) placement management system to upload all the mandatory documents (evidence that all required checks and training are completed) and use the self-placement tool to submit an application. Please visit the [CSU Workplace Learning](#) site for instructions to complete your [InPlace](#) application and information about [mandatory documents](#) required.

To mitigate potential conflicts arising from personal situations, teacher education students are recommended to follow these guidelines:

Placement at former schools: While you may complete placements at schools you attended, a minimum of five (5) years must have elapsed since your final year of attendance.

Placement at schools with your own children: You are *strongly* encouraged not to complete placements at schools where your own children or close relatives are currently enrolled.

Past employment or volunteer work: You should refrain from completing placements at schools where you have worked in paid employment or volunteered within the past five (5) years.

Placement at schools with close relatives: You are advised against completing placements at schools where close relatives are currently employed.

These guidelines aim to foster a supportive and professional environment for teacher education students during their placements, allowing them to focus on their learning and development as future educators.

IMPORTANT! To avoid conflicts of interest arising from your individual circumstances, you must disclose *any potential conflicts of interest* when applying for placement and stating your location preferences.

In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Senior Workplace Learning Coordinator, a placement where there is a known conflict of interest may be allowed. To request an assessment of any conflict of interest, students must formally email Workplace Learning (FOAE-WPL@csu.edu.au), providing detailed information about their extenuating circumstances. These circumstances may include challenges such as geographical isolation or limited availability of placement locations in the area.

Preparation for placement

Prior to the commencement of your placement, you should have completed the following:

1. **Assessment Tasks** submitted and approved as outlined in the Subject Outline (e.g., Professional Experience Goals, Professional Teaching Portfolio).
2. Familiarise yourself with this Student Guide to Professional Experience, the relevant Subject Outline, and recommended texts.
3. Prepare the following documents to provide to your placement site:
 - Working With Children Check clearance notice.
 - [Insurance Letter](#)
 - Consent form to document children's learning (early childhood settings only).
4. Prepare a Student Biography (early childhood placements only).
5. Prepare a professional experience folder as per EPT subject requirements.
6. Contact the placement site to:
 - clarify the expected dress code.
 - confirm your start time and who to report to on your first day.
 - arrange placement hours to align with your supervising teacher's schedule. In early childhood settings, this must be a minimum of 8 hours per day (including break times).
 - confirm your supervising teacher has accessed the CSU supervising teacher webpage.
 - confirm your supervising teachers' availability for each day of your placement.
 - In the event your supervising teacher has any planned absences, or issues accessing the supervising teacher page, please contact FOAE-WPL@csu.edu.au

Whilst on placement

What are the expectations of the university and school?

Integrate yourself into the staff as soon as possible by performing your duties professionally and proactively taking on additional responsibilities. This includes:

- Remaining at the placement setting during the assigned placement hours, which mirror your supervising teacher's schedule and completing your InPlace timesheet daily. In early childhood placements, this is a minimum of 8 consecutive hours (including lunch breaks).
- Abiding by the regulations of the education authority and your placement setting.
- Assisting with your supervising teachers' duties and activities expected as a member of the profession.
- Observing the established dress code, grooming standards, punctuality, and appropriate modes of address.
- Using information and communication technology ethically, including social media, internet, email, and any resources provided by the placement setting.
- Maintaining a complete, up-to-date and organised professional experience folder, (including lesson plans) that is accessible to your supervising teacher/university liaison officer upon request.

During your placement, you will be regarded as temporary staff and will adhere to the same guidelines as teachers, apart from assuming sole responsibility for children or being included in teacher-to-student ratios. At the mid-point of the placement, ensure that you participate in a collaborative review of the progress you have made on your placement with your supervising teacher, reviewing your progress against the focus areas of the Professional Experience Report and your Professional Experience Goals.

How much teaching am I expected to do?

Familiarise yourself with the learning and teaching activities expected of you while on placement, as these vary between EPT subjects and are outlined in the **Progression of Teaching** document for your specific placement subject. You can access the progression of teaching relevant to your professional experience subject on your subject specific site. Your supervising teacher also has access to the teaching progression for your placement on their supervising teacher page.

Attendances and absences

You are expected to be in attendance for each day of the placement and must comply with attendance requirements to meet the Accreditation of your course from Charles Sturt University. Absences due to illness and misadventure are required to be made up, however absences due to public holidays, industrial action and CSU exams are not. Further procedures regarding the notification and documentary evidence of an absence can be located in the [Professional Experience Handbook: Section 2 - Attendance](#).

Academic progress

In the event of you experiencing difficulty in demonstrating sufficient progress towards meeting the standard required while on placement, you may be placed “at risk” of failing, and a Developmental Support Plan may be implemented. This process is outlined in the [Professional Experience Handbook: Section 3- Student Placement Support and Review Process](#).

Despite support efforts, you may receive an ‘unsatisfactory’ grade’ if you have not demonstrated the standards required by the end of your placement. As professional experience subjects are regarded as indicators of professional suitability, a failure in the professional experience component means you have not met an essential requirement of the Academic Progress Regulations and may be required to complete additional professional experience.

After completion of placement

Reporting and assessment

At the completion of the placement, work with the supervising teacher to complete all sections of the Professional Experience Report, specifically signing the final page. In addition, the director/school principal also needs to sign and date the report. You should keep a copy of the Professional Experience Report for your records and upload the report as stated in your Subject Outline.

Remember to thank your supervising teacher, director/principal and other staff for their assistance during your placement. Finally, complete any other assessment items, as stated in your Subject Outline, and submit by the due date.

Contact details

If you have any queries or would like further information about this placement, please contact the appropriate person:

Subject Coordinator	Workplace Learning Team	Faculty of Arts and Education Courses Team	University Liaison Officer (ULO)	Supervising Teacher (ST)/Professional Experience Coordinator (PExC)
Responsible for: The academic aspects of the subject.	Responsible for: The organisation and administration of the placement; communication with the location.	Responsible for: The administrative aspects of your course.	Responsible for: The University's representative during placement.	Responsible for: Direct oversight of the placement.
The Subject Coordinator can help you with: Questions about the Subject Outline, the Interact site, Learning Modules, Resources, Assessment Items , and anything about the learning you will do in this <u>subject</u> .	The Workplace Learning Team can help you with: Compliance, mandatory documentation and InPlace support. Sister service approvals* Part time attendance to placement approvals* Unexpected changes in mentor or attendance dates during the period of the placement. *Are aspects of the self-application for placement in InPlace.	The Courses Team can help you with: Questions about the subject you need to enrol in, the progression of your course, pre-requisites, and anything about your <u>Course</u> .	The ULO can help you with: Questions about your placement and the teaching progression, mid and final reports where applicable to a subject, mid and final reports attendance, at risk procedures etc.	The ST can help you with: Questions about your day-to-day teaching, observations and assessment of your teaching practice. The PExC can help you with: Confirming your placement, negotiating supervising teacher allocation and school induction.
Please check the subject Brightspace site for Subject Coordinator details.	Workplace Learning Officer FOAE-WPL@csu.edu.au	Course Administrative Officer ask@csu.edu.au	Your ULO will make contact with you prior to the commencement of your placement.	Please contact your ST and/or PExC prior to placement to introduce yourself.

Summary of expectations in professional experience

Teaching and learning activities

Proactive engagement is crucial for success in professional experience placement. All lessons are planned and discussed with the supervising teacher at least one day **prior** to their implementation.

Forward planning and organisation are essential for successful completion of professional experience placements. Take responsibility for your learning and work, ensuring you are proactive in seeking supervision and guidance from your supervising teacher.

Documentation: Plan, teach, assess, reflect

In alignment with AITSL Professional Standards it is important to ensure you retain documentary evidence examples to provide detailed information regarding ways of evidencing the Teaching Standards

During your placement, plan and evaluate lessons using the planning templates provided on the Charles Sturt University subject site and listed in subject Progression of Teaching.

Ensure lesson plans are detailed enough for another teacher to follow.

Your planning approach should focus on:

- Learning objective/outcome/intention: *What do I want the children to learn?*
- Indicators of success/achievement criteria: *How will I know they have learned this?*
- Learning activities: *What learning experiences would best help them learn this?*

Evaluate all lessons/learning experiences through reflection and set goals for the next lesson/session/day.

For primary school placements, it is recommended you maintain a daybook for the duration of placement. This should include a timetable, an overview of teaching and non-teaching tasks, notes of other responsibilities (e.g., special events), and reminders about specific students, and any other detail which will assist in classroom organisation and management.