

FACULTY OF ARTS & EDUCATION

GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE PLACEMENT

EPT326: EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

This Guide applies to students completing EPT326 within the course Bachelor to Education (Birth to 5 Years).

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the professional experience placement component of EPT326 Early Childhood Professional Practice. Professional experience is a foundational requirement of this degree and provides teacher education students with the opportunity to extend the teacher education student's insight into the operation of early childhood services and provide scope for the development of professional pedagogy with three to five year old children. It offers teacher education students an opportunity to observe, plan, implement and reflect upon learning, play and relationships for young children; to communicate with families and other educators to address the learning capabilities of young children in a group setting; to respond positively to family and community cultures in caregiving and education practices; and to implement quality environments and leadership for wellness and wellbeing for young children.

This placement includes a 25 day professional experience placement in an approved early childhood setting. Teacher education students will, in collaboration with their supervising teachers, 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 for Early Childhood Education and Care](#), and the [Australian Professional Standards for Early Childhood Teachers](#). The placement is designed so that collaboration and feedback possibilities are scheduled on a daily basis where the supervising teacher and the teacher education student discuss lesson planning, classroom strategies and feedback from classroom teaching. Teacher education students will develop skills which build on their knowledge and understanding from their prior curriculum method and education subjects.* This guide gives teacher education students and supervising teachers an overview of the expectations of this specific placement and what is required for teacher education students to meet the passing criteria.

The [Professional Experience Handbook](#) gives the supervising teacher and the teacher education student a detailed coverage of the professional experience arrangements for all placements.

Upon successful completion of this subject, students should:

- Be able to apply academic knowledge and principles to the 3-5 years setting;
- Be able to have the capacity to use records of individual children's learning and interests as a basis for planned experiences;
- Be able to demonstrate knowledge of planning, implementing and evaluating learning experiences for children aged 3-5 years based on individual capacities and interests;
- Be able to demonstrate the ability to initiate and sustain positive and sympathetic contacts with young children on an individual basis;
- Be able to demonstrate the necessity of abiding by the regulations and quality assurance procedures that apply to settings for children aged 3-5 years;
- Be able to demonstrate skills in making resources to enhance the learning and development of 3-5 year old children;
- Be able to demonstrate skills of linking child development theory to early childhood practices and programs for 3-5 year olds;
- Be able to demonstrate a developing understanding of the roles of the professional , parents and communities in early childhood services;
- Show the ability to use reflective practice in their work with children;
- Have competently employed classroom and behaviour management practices appropriate to children aged 3-5;
- Understand transition issues relevant to children 3-5;
- Have successfully completed up to 25 days of professional experience with 3-5 year olds;
- Be able to demonstrate competence in a range of pedagogical, social, and administrative skills commensurate with the professional experience setting and the student's stage in the course.

Please read the [Professional Experience Handbook](#) in conjunction with this EPT326 Guide to Professional Experience Placement

*Supervising teachers please note: For more information about the subjects that teacher education students have completed and their academic content, please refer to the course structure for the [Bachelor of Education \(Birth to 5 Years\)](#).

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION FOR SUPERVISING TEACHERS

Guidelines on payment processes

At the beginning of the professional experience placement, the supervising teacher is required to send in the following forms if being paid personally:

- Banking Details Form
- Supervising Teacher Claim Form

If you would prefer the school to be paid please forward a Tax Invoice to your school office and then email it to Education-WPL@csu.edu.au. The invoice will be paid upon receipt of:

- Professional Experience Report

Supervising teacher payments will be processed when all documentation, including placement reports (described below) has been received.

During the placement

It is absolutely essential that the supervising teacher supervise and mentor the teacher education student in their emerging pedagogy. This includes the supervising teacher reviewing the teacher education student's written documentation in his or her professional experience folders every day, and discussing and reviewing the lesson/group/unit plans and emerging pedagogy. Supervising teachers are asked to complete one (1) Learning Experience Feedback Sheet each day. These are for purposes of formal feedback to the teacher education student. If at any stage the supervising teacher believes that there is a concern then please see below for student 'At Risk' procedures.

Should there be any concerns regarding the teacher education student's progress throughout the placement and after consultation with the teacher education student and professional experience liaison officer the supervising teacher is asked to complete the Notification of Concern form as a matter of urgency and email to the workplace learning and professional experience team at Education-WPL@csu.edu.au. If there are no concerns please continue to supervise and mentor the student as normal.

Information about academic expectations, timing of placement activities and assessment requirements for students can be found in the [Progression of Teaching](#) sections of this guide.

Mid placement

At the mid-point of the placement, supervising teachers are asked to engage with the teacher education student in a collaborative review of their progress to date with reference to the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) in order to identify demonstrated strengths and areas for further development during the placement.

Completion of placement

Supervising teachers are required to complete the Professional Experience Report. Please refer to the [Australian Professional Standards for Teachers](#) to assist you in completing the report when reviewing the student's performance and any supporting documentation in the student's professional experience folder etc. Please do not hesitate to contact the workplace learning team at Education-WPL@csu.edu.au should you have any questions or concerns regarding this report or your assessment responsibility.

It is important that the report is fully completed before the addition of any signatures. These must be entered sequentially: the report is 'locked down' as signatures are added, and editing after this occurs is not possible. After obtaining all signatures, the supervising teacher must email the completed report to the teacher education student. The teacher education student must compile all relevant documents and submit them to the CSU electronic assignment submission tracking system (EASTS), on the final day of placement, before leaving the placement site.

Please note: The teacher education student's grade cannot be finalised until the professional experience report is returned to the university. The final grade will be determined by the supervising teacher and confirmed by the subject coordinator.

Teacher education student “At Risk” information

Supervising teachers are asked to refer to the [Professional Experience Handbook](#) to familiarise themselves with the procedures for dealing with a teacher education student they consider may be at the 'causing concern' level for any of the criteria as presented in the final professional experience report, or where the teacher education student is not displaying professional behaviour.

Should the supervising teacher have any concerns regarding the teacher education student's achievement of these standards the Notification of Concern form should be completed and emailed to the workplace learning team as a matter of urgency Education-WPL@csu.edu.au

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION FOR TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

How to start and complete my placement in 3 easy steps?

1. There are a number of steps to follow to ensure the effective organisation of the placement which can be found in the Handbook for [Workplace Learning Professional Experience Guidelines and Procedures](#) on the [Teacher Education Workplace Learning website](#), under [Section 3 of the Professional Experience Handbook](#).

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. [Click here for instructions on how to use InPlace.](#)

In order to avoid a personal conflict of interest you are advised that:

- A teacher education student may not return to their place of employment;
- A teacher education student may not undertake a placement at an EC setting where their own child is attending;
- A teacher education student may not undertake a placement in an EC setting where they have worked in paid employment or as a volunteer in the past 2 Years;
- A teacher education student may not undertake a placement in an EC setting in which a close relative is currently working, either as a teacher or as a member of the non-teaching staff.
- A teacher education student is not allowed to complete both placements in the same EC setting unless permission has been granted by the subject coordinator and workplace learning team due to extenuating circumstances
- A teacher education students is not allowed to commence their placement prior to Week 3 of the University Session.

A placement which has been organised by a student without the approval of the workplace learning team will not be approved.

2. Whilst on placement you should aim to become part of the staff as soon as possible by undertaking your duties in a professional manner. You are regarded as temporary members of staff and, accordingly, should observe the same conditions as teachers. For example:
 - Wear your University student ID card in a clear plastic lanyard or clear plastic name badge during visits and placements.
 - Present the following to the EC Setting prior to commencing the placement:
 - Working with Children Check clearance letter
 - Letter of Introduction
 - Permission to Observe Forms
 - [Insurance Letter](#)
 - Adhere to all Service policies and procedures.
 - Keep your email and internet usage to a minimum and only for professional experience.
 - Dress in a way which is acceptable to other members of staff and the community of the EC setting.
 - Ensure that the supervising teacher will be present every day of the placement. In the event of any planned absences of the supervising teacher, adjustments will need to be made to the placement. Should this occur, teacher education students must organise another ACECQA approved University Early Childhood qualified supervising teacher for supervision purposes. Please also contact the workplace learning team for approval of the 2nd supervising teacher at Education-WPL@csu.edu.au
 - Organise your hours of placement schedule, which needs to be a minimum of a recurring two (2) days per week for seven (7) hours (excluding break times).
 - Confirm that the supervising teacher has been able to access the supervising teacher webpage;
 - Confirm expected hours of work; where to go and who to contact upon arrival

- Maintain a high level of professionalism during the placement; including maintaining a level of confidentiality about your experiences and being judicious about any information conveyed to others outside of the EC setting.
- Contribute to the professional practice by taking the initiative in offering to undertake additional responsibilities and extra activities.

You should be familiar with the learning and teaching activities that are expected of you while on placement, they are provided in the [Progression of Teaching](#) sections of this guide and in the Subject Outline.

3. When you complete your placement you should work with the supervising teacher to complete all sections of the final report.

- Specifically sign and comment on the final page.
- In addition, the Director and teacher education student will add a comment, digital signatures and the date.
- You must upload Assessment Item 2: Professional Experience Report to EASTS on the final day of the placement, preferably before leaving the placement site.
- You should remember to thank your supervising teacher, director and other staff for their assistance during your placement. It is a matter of courtesy as well as remembering that this is the start of your professional career as a teacher and you are your own best advertisement.

CSU Academic Progress Regulations (as per CSU University Handbook)

This subject is regarded as an indicator of your professional suitability. A failure in the professional experience component will mean that you have not met an essential element of the Academic Progress Regulations. Should you fail the professional experience component of this subject you may be excluded from your course for three years, and you will be required to re-apply for admission to the course because continuation after exclusion is not automatic. Should you experience any difficulties in the professional experience component of this subject and/or you have been identified as being “at risk”, it is strongly recommended that you immediately seek additional assistance and advice from your supervising teacher, the School Principal/Director or delegated member of staff, university staff and/or the Professional Experience Liaison Officer.

Absences

You are expected to be in attendance for each day of the placement, and must comply with attendance requirements of the placements in order to meet the requirements of both the CSU degree and NESA regulations. In cases of illness or misadventure an absence may be required. **All absences must be made up, including public holidays.** Further procedures regarding the notification and documentary evidence can be located on the [Professional Experience Handbook: Section 3- Leave of Absence](#).

Difficulties and obtaining assistance

Students who are experiencing difficulties should not "suffer in silence" but should make use of all personnel who are in a position to help. A suggested order of the people who should be approached in the event of difficulties being experienced is as follows:

- Supervising Teacher
- Director
- Professional Experience Liaison Officer (PELO)
- Subject Coordinator
- If any serious problems arise, the student or supervising teacher should contact the workplace learning team immediately at Education-WPL@csu.edu.au

If the teacher education student is experiencing difficulty with a supervising teacher or principal, initial contact should be directed to the PELO

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
<p>Responsible for: The academic aspects of the subject.</p> <p>The Subject Coordinator can help you with:</p> <p>Questions about the Subject Outline, the Interact site, Learning Modules, Resources, Assessment Items and Anything about the learning you will do in this Subject.</p>	<p>Responsible for: The organisation and administration of the placement. Communication with the service. Organisation of the PELO.</p> <p>WPL office can help you with: Questions about your placement, attendance, at risk procedures etc.</p>
<p>Jessamy Davies Subject Coordinator JDavies@csu.edu.au</p>	<p>Workplace Learning Officer Education-WPL@csu.edu.au</p>

PROGRESSION OF TEACHING

Over this professional experience you will need to move through the following sequence of teaching and professional experience tasks outlined below.

Note: Teaching responsibilities are the suggested minimum requirements and may need to be adjusted in response to the needs of your context and your own development and progress.

PLACEMENT TIMING	PLACEMENT TASKS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENT	OUTCOMES
<p>Week 1</p> <p>Days 1-5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Become familiar with the EC setting and Supervising Teacher; learn the children's names. ▪ Assist with the daily operations of the program and routines. ▪ Begin observing the children – Day 1 - their play, interactions and explorations: <u>2 learning stories per day for the duration of your placement.</u> Use these observations to inform your planning. Please do not choose focus children. All children are to be included. ▪ Gain insight into young children's interests, motives, capabilities and family experiences. ▪ Start planning and <u>implementing two play-based learning</u> experiences per day beginning day 3 based on your observations and learning stories. ▪ Discuss your plans and intentions for Week 2 with the supervising teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction poster - Place approved introduction poster on display where parents can view it. ▪ Appendix 2 - Complete a context analysis - explore service policies. ▪ Appendix 3 - Observe and document two (2) Learning stories per day. Please use the PowerPoint in Interact2 to help you format your Learning Stories. Link EYLF Learning Outcomes to the child's play and learning. (Please do not use the EYLF Learning Outcomes in a tick box format or use numbers and dot points to represent each Learning Outcome). ▪ Appendix 4 - Implement two intentional play-based learning experiences per day from day three. ▪ Appendix 5 – start planning group times for the children from day three - one per day.
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Days 5- 10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Keep assisting the supervising teacher and other staff in the room. ▪ Continue to observe and write <u>2 Learning Stories</u> per day about the children's' play ideas, investigations and learning. ▪ Plan and implement <u>two (2) play-based learning experiences</u> per day. ▪ Plan <u>one (1) group time experience</u> every day. ▪ Help with care routines and transitioning throughout your week. <p>Day 10: Discuss and complete mid placement review with supervising teacher</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 3 - Continue to write up your 2 Learning Stories per day and place in your PE folder for your supervising teacher to view. ▪ Appendix 4 - Plan and implement 2 play-based learning experiences daily. Discuss with your ST. Ensure that you have your PE folder placed on the bench for the ST to view at all times. ▪ Appendix 5 - plan group time experiences for young children – one (1) per day. ▪ Inquiry-based learning - Discuss the children's' play interests with your ST, to plan for inquiry-based learning for weeks 3, 4 & 5. Choose one significant interest to plan for the last three weeks. Work with your ST and other staff in the room. For Weeks 3-5 document your inquiry-based interest in a Visual Art book or floor book. (Please see Claire Warden).

PLACEMENT TIMING	PLACEMENT TASKS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENT	OUTCOMES
<p>Weeks 3 and</p> <p>Week 4</p> <p>Inquiry-based learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to observe, document and plan for children's learning through inquiry-based play program, i.e. 2 x learning stories; 2 x intentional plans and 1 group time. This may be documented in your PE folder, a visual art book or a floor book. Continue to consult and communicate with other staff members. Consider ways that you can extend, deepen and build on the children's learning over the next two weeks. Discuss leadership week (Week 5) with your supervising teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to identify the children's interests and ways of learning. Plan for inquiry-based learning for weeks 3, 4 & 5. Use your Learning Stories to plan for inquiry-based learning, continuing to use the information given on completing learning stories and intentional planning. Document your inquiry-based learning in a visual arts book or floor book to allow the supervising teacher, other educators and parents to view ongoing learning on a specific interest that has captivated the children.
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Inquiry-based learning + leadership week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue with your ongoing inquiry-based planning and documentation of children's play, learning and their interests in your Visual Art book. Display your documentation for parents to view. Take a leadership role for the 5th week and implement the full day program every day for 5 days. This will include planning inside and outside time, small group time and transitioning. Work and collaborate with your supervising teacher and other educators as a team to create an inspiring play-based and caregiving environment. Think about your leadership role, the inquiry-based learning experiences for the children and caregiving pedagogies as you work the staff in your room. 	<p>Complete professional experience final report and reflection and evaluation following discussions with your supervising teacher and PELO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue as with week four. Observe, plan and document children's learning. Link learning to EYLF Learning Outcomes. Leadership week - in collaboration with the room team, plan and implement a wide range of experiences for children's learning. This week is about your emerging leadership skills. <p><i>N.B. If you are completing your professional experience in a part-time mode, you will need to contact your supervising teacher regularly to ensure that you are planning and programming continues to reflect the children's interests, explorations and development.</i></p>

CYCLE OF SUPERVISION

The teacher education student and the supervising teacher should engage in the following cycle of supervision:



SUMMARY OF EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS IN PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Learning and Teacher Activities

All teacher education students **MUST** be proactive in their own learning. This means that you must seek out your supervising teacher every day and provide them with your professional experience folder with documentation of the children's learning, and the intentional teaching plan/s for children's learning prior to and on the day of teaching. It is an expectation that learning experiences are planned and discussed with the supervising teacher prior to the implementation of each learning experience.

Forward planning and organisation is essential for your successful completion of this subject EPT326 Early Childhood Professional Practice. Please leave your folder on the bench in the room in which your supervising teacher works. In this placement, students will have the possibility of the supervising teacher working in another room. It is important that your learning and work is your own responsibility and it is essential that you are proactive in seeking supervision and mentorship from your supervising teacher, not the other way around.

Professional experience documentation

It is essential for teacher education students to always have their documentation complete, up-to-date and organised. During their placement, students are required to maintain their documentation in a professional experience folder in a tidy and professional manner. This folder needs to be accessible to the supervising teacher and professional experience liaison officer throughout the placement. Please do not leave your documentation on your iPad or Laptop or at home. Your work needs to be printed off every night and placed as a hard copy in your folder.

Additionally, students will be required to visit the CSU EPT326 Early Childhood Professional Practice Interact2 site for information on documentation of children's learning and planning appendices, announcements and to contribute to the subject forum.

During the final week of the placement (or earlier if requested by the supervising teacher) the professional experience folder must be submitted to the supervising teacher for review. **It does NOT need to be returned to the university.**

APPENDIX 1: PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE SMART GOALS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE GOALS, SAMPLE AND TEMPLATE

All Goals are to be designed using the SMART criteria; that is they must be:

1. **Specific:** A specific goal will tell you the, who, what, where, when, and how. Since the purpose of goal setting is to remove ambiguity, it's important to know the specifics of how a goal will be achieved.
2. **Measureable:** Children and Teachers must know what success "looks like" or they might settle for less than they're capable of.
3. **Attainable:** Ideal goals are ambitious but also attainable. As a Teacher we would like to see all children's tracking and following cues but this isn't realistic. However, this doesn't mean you can't make children stretch their capabilities.
4. **Relevant:** These goals must be relevant to children and not just teachers. This might require some observation, and collaboration between children and supervising teachers and pre service teachers to lead to relevant goals.
5. **Timely:** Every goal needs a deadline to create a sense of urgency. Without this deadline, the goal can remain unmet, with the vague promise that you're "still working on it."

APPENDIX 1a: SAMPLE GOALS

Goals	Link goals to information from the EYLF and current textbook.	List strategies or steps that you will use to achieve this PE goal.	How will you measure the success of your goal?
<p>Goal 1</p> <p>To learn the importance of play, based on the children's interests and set up and implement appropriate and engaging play-based learning experiences.</p>	<p>EYLF Practice: Learning through Play "Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine" (DWEER, 2009, p. 15).</p> <p>"Play-based programs have the potential to create contexts in which children's everyday cognition can be expressed, but for these programs to be effective in building conceptual connections between the teacher and the children, pedagogical framing of the materials being provided is essential: play-based programs provide an effective pedagogical mechanism for teachers to stimulate play of everyday activities" (Fleer, 2010, p. 30).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase my knowledge about play from textbooks. • Good knowledge of the EYLF outcomes about play. • Observe children to learn about their individual interests. • Observe children to learn about their group interests. • Plan age appropriate play experiences. • Provide useful and enough resources for the play experiences. • Learn how to set up engaging play areas with the help of textbooks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By children's level of response and interaction. • By observing the children's interests and engagement. • The feedback from my supervising teacher about my planned play experiences. • By knowing the benefits of 'play and learning' for the children. • By knowing the different types of play. • By planning appropriate 'play and learning' for the children

APPENDIX 1b: PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE GOALS TEMPLATE

STUDENT NAME:		SUBJECT CODE:	
ASSESSMENT 1			
Goals	Link goals to information from the EYLF and current textbook	List strategies or steps that you will use to achieve this PE goal.	How will you measure the success of your goal?
Goal 1			
Goal 2			
Goal 3			

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT ANALYSIS

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE PROFILE AND CONTEXT

<p>The service and community, and philosophy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Map of location of the centre and community 2. Demographic information i.e. what is the ethnic/cultural/socio-economic make-up of the community? 3. How is this reflected in the philosophy of the centre? 4. Place EC Centre's handbook and philosophy in your folder. 5. Review EC Centre's policies. 	<p>Children and staff.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of children 2. Children's background – Children from culturally and linguistically diverse background, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, children with additional needs &/or diagnosed disabilities. 3. Number & qualifications of the staff. Include specialist teachers and support staff
<p>Program</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Daily Routine 2. How are the children's lives reflected in the planning processes? 3. Methods of planning for individual, small group and large group learning experiences, both indoor and outdoor environments. 4. Include the centre's curriculum or planning policy. 	<p>ACECQA Regulatory Process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss with ST the ACECQA regulatory Assessment and Rating process and Quality Improvement Plans
<p>The learning environment</p> <p>Draw a mud map of the indoor and outdoor environments noting all the learning areas and the walkways for children and staff between these learning areas.</p>	

APPENDIX 3: LEARNING STORIES

LEARNING STORIES

Title

Date

Children's Names & Ages

Where is this learning story taking place?

What are the children interested in? What is your participation in this play experience?

Who is the child as a learner (motives and what matters)? What is the child learning (learning concepts & EYLF outcomes)?

What will you plan to support their learning? List 3 play-based learning experiences

APPENDIX 4: INTENTIONAL LEARNING PLANS FOR PLAY BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

INTENTIONAL LEARNING PLANS FOR PLAY BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Title:

Date:

Children's Names & Ages:

Where is this learning story taking place?

Summary of what happened previously – what were the children interested in?

What do you want the children to learn? Include links to the EYLF learning outcomes.

What will you do? – give a detailed description of your plan.

Supportive learning environment – what materials and resources will you use and how will you set up the learning environment?

Role of the educator – how will you support and scaffold the children's learning? What strategies, words, questions and techniques will you use?

Evaluation of the children's engagement with the play-based learning experience and your role as the educator.

APPENDIX 5: GROUP TIME PLANS

GROUP TIME PLANS

Music, Movement, Drama, Storytelling, Songs and Finger Plays

Small Group:

Date:

Time:

Place:

Describe what happened previously to inform your plans.

Describe what you want the children to do and learn.

Describe your intended plan. What will you do?

Physical learning environment –
materials & resources (include songs,
music, stories etc.)

Educator's role – what teaching strategies will you use?

Evaluation – include children's engagement and future ideas.