

Beginning Professional Placement Expectations

First Year Early Childhood Education Placements (11991, 11995, 11996)

The following document sets out the general expectations for a **beginning placement** in ECE.

General Placement information

- This placement is normally undertaken during the first year of a three- or four-year undergraduate degree.
- Beginning level Early Childhood placements are associated with units focusing on building responsive relationships for optimal child learning, development and wellbeing; infant and toddler learning and care; and planning for effective children's learning.
- Setting of Placement – Birth to 35-month setting
- **Number of Days – 5 (per subject)**

Getting Started: Introduction, Orientation & Observation

- Undertake an orientation to the ECE setting prior to the first day of placement
- Observe and work alongside educators and children in a range of contexts and settings, noting the ways relationships are established and maintained
- Observe and engage with children informally and in planned activities
- Collaborate on learning experiences with the mentor teacher and university peers
- Observe strategies for creating a safe, structured learning environment, including behaviour management

Professional Knowledge and Practice

- Demonstrate an understanding of the setting context and its relationship with learning experiences planned and delivered in the program to engage all children as appropriate to their learning and curriculum outcomes
- Observe and reflect on the ways children relate with adults, children and the learning environment to inform future planning and enhance their learning
- Plan, implement and evaluate learning experiences based on your observations, that illustrate an appropriate grasp of professional knowledge using age appropriate and relevant resources
- Discuss ways to engage all learners with the mentor teacher and university peers, considering how relationships contribute to well-planned learning experiences
- Understand the importance of analysing observational and gathered assessment data, summative & formative, to guide curriculum and build relationships with children
- Observe how children relate with adults, children and learning environments to inform future planning and enhance their learning
- Show an understanding of the need to differentiate their teaching to meet the individual needs of a range of learners, and recognise differentiation in action

By (approximately) the last day of the 5-day placement, plan, implement and evaluate at least one learning experience (or as outlined in the EYLF [2022, p.27] at least one full planning cycle)

NOTE: *References to learning experiences are an indication of common experience, not a required minimum or set limit. The exact number of learning experiences and days for teaching can be negotiated between the mentor and the preservice teacher with reference to these guidelines.*

Professional Engagement and Learning

- Attend meetings, duties, centre activities and any opportunities for engagement with the broader centre community
- Conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner whilst in centres, including seeking and using feedback on their performance
- Interact with teachers, educators, children, families and the centre community in an appropriate manner and comply with all relevant ethical and legal requirements
- With permission, collect evidence of curriculum ideas, strategies, timetables, centre policy documents, teaching resources, learning experience plans, curriculum programs and other relevant documentation to help you demonstrate your knowledge of the Australian Graduate Teaching Standards and the National Quality Framework.

General Expectations

- It is expected that every learning experience at all placement levels has a **purposefully designed plan, which we recommend is provided to the mentor 24 hours prior to the learning experience taking place**. We do understand this may not always be realistic, so we leave this up to the mentor to determine what they deem appropriate e.g. the morning of. **The bottom line for us is, no plan = no teach**. This would include if the plan presented is not of an acceptable standard or if it has not been presented to the mentor within the timeframe required (NOTE: This may not apply to all beginning placements or for spontaneous learning experiences, as discussed and agreed upon with mentor teachers)
- Preservice teachers (PSTs) are involved in planning and programming at UC. Our standard planning templates for learning experiences can be modified by the PST to align with the requirements of the centre but we do have a reflection section at the end of the lesson plan template
- On completing each learning experience, we would expect the PST to evaluate and reflect on the experience with their mentor as well as document their reflections on their planning and delivery so they can refer to this for future planning
- We expect the PST to be involved in regular debriefs with their mentor (verbal and/or written).
- At the midway point we encourage mentors to use the placement report form to provide feedback against the *Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, and Professional Engagement* descriptors. This gives the PST a clear understanding of areas of strength at that point in time and areas which need further development
- As this is a 5-day placement, only a final report is required. Where students are completing multiple beginning placements concurrently in the same service, only one final summative report is required, indicating the units of study associated with the placements.