Early Childhood Studies 2019 v1.0

Applied Senior Syllabus

This syllabus is for implementation with Year 11 students in 2019.

Queensland Government | Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority

For all Queensland schools

170234

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1 Course overview

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Rationale

The first five years of life are critical in shaping children's future growth and development, wellbeing and learning. Research has shown that the early years has significant influence on an individual's accomplishments in family, school, and community life. Knowledge and understanding of how children grow, develop and learn enables students to positively influence their development and effectively interact with children. The subject encourages students to be advocates for the wellbeing of children by appreciating the significance of these interactions in order to help children develop into confident, independent and caring adults.

Early Childhood Studies draws upon the Early Years Learning Framework (Council of Australian Governments, 2009).

Early Childhood Studies focuses on learning about children aged from birth to five years. A cornerstone of the subject is the significance of play to a child's development. Play involves opportunities in which children explore, imagine, investigate and engage in purposeful and meaningful experiences to make sense of their world. Students explore play-based learning activities from two perspectives: they use theories about early childhood learning and devise play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs.

A course of study involves learning about core concepts and ideas related to the fundamentals of early childhood, and practices in early childhood learning. Core topics are embedded in electives that influence the development of children, such as play and creativity, literacy and numeracy skills, being in a safe place, health and physical wellbeing and indoor and outdoor learning environments. Throughout the course of study, students make decisions and solve problems and work individually and with others.

Students examine the interrelatedness of core concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning. They plan, justify and evaluate play-based learning activities responsive to the needs of children as well as evaluating contexts in early childhood learning. This enables students to develop understanding of the multifaceted, diverse and significant nature of early childhood learning.

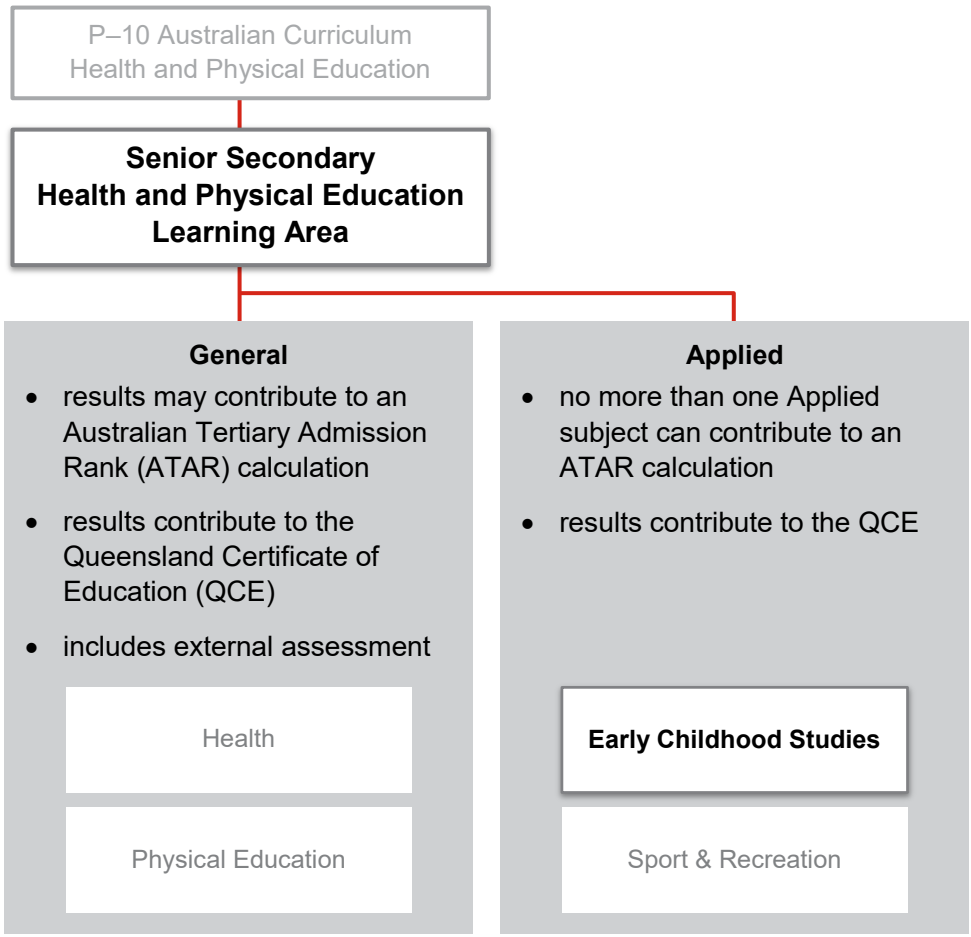
The course of study provides opportunities for students to interact with children aged from birth to five years; this allows students to appreciate that children are unique individuals. Students interact with early childhood educators, through excursions and visits to quality early childhood education and care settings, supporting them to develop self-confidence, independence, a responsible attitude towards children and readiness for the workplace. Through these interactions students understand the scope of early childhood learning as well develop awareness of the important role early childhood educators have in promoting child development.

Pathways

A course of study in Early Childhood Studies can establish a basis for further education and employment in health, community services and education. Depending on qualifications, opportunities exist as early childhood educators or teacher's aides or assistants in early childhood settings, childcare facilities, kindergartens and early learning centres.

1.1.2 Learning area structure

Figure 1: Summary of subjects offered in the Health and Physical Education learning area



1.2 Teaching and learning

1.2.1 Dimensions and objectives

The dimensions are the salient properties or characteristics of distinctive learning for this subject. The objectives describe what students should know and be able to do by the end of the course of study.

Progress in a particular dimension may depend on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in other dimensions. Learning through each of the dimensions increases in complexity to allow for greater independence for learners over a four-unit course of study.

The standards have a direct relationship with the objectives, and are described in the same dimensions as the objectives. Schools assess how well students have achieved all of the objectives using the standards.

The dimensions for a course of study in this subject are:

- Dimension 1: Knowing and understanding
- Dimension 2: Analysing and applying
- Dimension 3: Planning and evaluating.

Dimension 1: Knowing and understanding

The dimension Knowing and understanding involves students building connections between new knowledge gained and prior knowledge. Students describe and explain core knowledge, understanding and skills that underpin early childhood learning.

Objectives

By the conclusion of the course of study, students should:

- describe concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood
- explain concepts and ideas of practices of early childhood learning.

When students describe concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood, they give an account of characteristics or features of the fundamentals of early childhood. The fundamentals of early childhood include growth and development, relationships and identity, connectedness, wellbeing, policies and pathways.

When students explain concepts and ideas of practices in early childhood learning, they use terminology and provide additional information or examples that demonstrate understanding of the practices in early childhood learning. Practices include play-based learning, responsiveness, active learning environments, and observations.

Dimension 2: Analysing and applying

The dimension Analysing and applying involves students determining how parts relate to each other within a structure and how these parts are used for a particular purpose. They use language conventions and features to communicate for specific purposes. When students analyse and apply, they draw on their learning from Knowing and understanding.

Objectives

By the conclusion of the course of study, students should:

- analyse concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning
- apply concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning

- use language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information for specific purposes.

When students analyse concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning, they dissect information to establish relationships and consider the interrelationships relevant to contexts and play-based learning activities. Contexts are the conditions and circumstances that are relevant to a situation, setting or scenario that occur in early childhood learning. Examples include: programs for children with diverse learning needs, effectiveness of education and care services, safety issues in early childhood learning, and career pathways and post-school options.

When students apply concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood, they select relevant concepts and ideas to use with contexts and play-based learning activities, e.g. using safety guidelines develop a policy for an early childhood centre or selecting an age-appropriate play-based learning activity for a child.

When students use language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information for specific purposes, they use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, text types and structures in written, oral and visual communication modes.

Dimension 3: Planning and evaluating

The dimension Planning and evaluating involves students planning, justifying and evaluating. They plan and justify play-based learning activities and evaluate the effectiveness of play-based learning activities in responding to children's needs. As well, they evaluate contexts related to early childhood learning. Criteria for evaluation are developed by the teacher or the student based on the concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and/or practices of early childhood learning. When students plan, justify, and evaluate, they draw on their learning in Knowing and understanding and Analysing and applying.

Objectives

By the conclusion of the course of study, students should:

- plan and justify play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs
- evaluate play-based learning activities in response to children's needs
- evaluate contexts in early childhood learning.

When students plan, they devise play-based learning activities that are responsive to children's needs; they describe the relationships and consider the interrelationships between the fundamentals and practices in early childhood learning and establish how the play-based learning activities are responsive to children's needs. When students justify, they give sound reasons or evidence for how play-based learning activities respond to children's needs.

When students evaluate play-based learning activities in response to children's needs, they assign merit according to criteria. Evaluation relates to the effectiveness of play-based learning activities in responding to children's needs.

When students evaluate contexts in early childhood learning, they assign merit by considering the value, worth or quality of contexts in early childhood learning.

1.2.2 Underpinning factors

There are five factors that underpin and are essential for defining the distinctive nature of Applied syllabuses:

- applied learning
- community connections
- core skills for work

- literacy
- numeracy.

These factors, build on the general capabilities found in the P–10 Australian Curriculum. They overlap and interact, are derived from current education, industry and community expectations, and inform and shape Early Childhood Studies.

All Applied syllabuses cover all of the underpinning factors in some way, though coverage may vary from syllabus to syllabus. Students should be provided with a variety of opportunities to learn through and about the five underpinning factors across the four-unit course of study.

Applied learning and community connections emphasise the importance of applying learning in workplace and community situations. Applied learning is an approach to contextualised learning; community connections provide contexts for learning, acquiring and applying knowledge, understanding and skills. Core skills for work, literacy and numeracy, however, contain identifiable knowledge and skills which can be directly assessed. The relevant knowledge and skills for these three factors are contained in the course dimensions and objectives for Early Childhood Studies.

Applied learning

Applied learning is the acquisition and application of knowledge, understanding and skills in real-world or lifelike contexts. Contexts should be authentic and may encompass work place, industry and community situations.

Applied learning values knowledge — including subject knowledge, skills, techniques and procedures — and emphasises learning through doing. It includes both theory and the application of theory, connecting subject knowledge and understanding with the development of practical skills.

Applied learning:

- links theory and practice
- integrates knowledge and skills in real-world and/or lifelike contexts
- encourages students to work individually and in teams to complete tasks and solve problems
- enables students to develop new learnings and transfer their knowledge, understanding and skills to a range of contexts
- uses assessment that is authentic and reflects the content and contexts.

Community connections

Community connections build students' awareness and understanding of life beyond school through authentic, real-world interactions. This understanding supports transition from school to participation in, and contribution to, community, industry, work and not-for-profit organisations (NFPOs). 'Community' includes the school community and the wider community beyond the school, including virtual communities.

Valuing a sense of community encourages responsible citizenship. Connecting with community seeks to deepen students' knowledge and understanding of the world around them and provide them with the knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions relevant to community, industry and workplace contexts. It is through these interactions that students develop as active and informed citizens.

Schools plan connections with community as part of their teaching and learning programs to connect classroom experience with the world outside the classroom. It is a mutual or reciprocal arrangement encompassing access to relevant experience and expertise. The learning can be based in community settings, including workplaces, and/or in the school setting, including the classroom.

Community connections can occur through formal arrangements or more informal interactions. Opportunities for community connections include:

- visiting a business or community organisation or agency
- organising an event for the school or local community
- working with community groups in a range of activities
- providing a service for the local community
- attending industry expos and career 'taster' days
- participating in mentoring programs and work shadowing
- gaining work experience in industry
- participating in community service projects or engaging in service learning
- interacting with visitors to the school, such as community representatives, industry experts, employers, employees and the self-employed
- internet, phone or video conferencing with other school communities.

Core skills for work

In August 2013, the Australian Government released the *Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework (CSfW)*[1]. The *CSfW* describes a set of knowledge, understanding and non-technical skills that underpin successful participation in work.[2] These skills are often referred to as generic or employability skills. They contribute to work performance in combination with technical skills, discipline-specific skills, and core language, literacy and numeracy skills.
The *CSfW* describes performance in ten skill areas grouped under three skill clusters, shown in the table below. These skills can be embedded, taught and assessed across Early Childhood Studies. Relevant aspects of core skills for work are assessed, as described in the standards.

Table 1: Core skills for work skill clusters and skill areas

	Skill cluster 1: Navigate the world of work	Skill cluster 2: Interacting with others	Skill cluster 3: Getting the work done
Skill areas	• Manage career and work life • Work with roles, rights and protocols	• Communicate for work • Connect and work with others • Recognise and utilise diverse perspectives	• Plan and organise • Make decisions • Identify and solve problems • Create and innovate • Work in a digital world

Literacy in Early Childhood Studies

The information and ideas that make up the Early Childhood Studies are communicated in language and texts. Literacy is the set of knowledge and skills about language and texts that is essential for understanding and conveying this content.

Each Applied syllabus has its own specific content and ways to convey and present this content. On-going systematic teaching and learning focused on the literacy knowledge and skills specific to Early Childhood Studies is essential for student achievement.

Students need to learn and use knowledge and skills of reading, viewing and listening to understand and learn the content of Early Childhood Studies. Students need to learn and use the

[1] More information about the *Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework* is available at https://docs.education.gov.au/node/37095.

[2] The term 'work' is used in the broadest sense: activity that is directed at a specific purpose, which may or may not be for remuneration or gain.

knowledge and skills of writing, composing and speaking to convey the Early Childhood Studies content they have learnt.

In teaching and learning in Early Childhood Studies, students learn a variety of strategies to understand, use, analyse and evaluate ideas and information conveyed in language and texts.

To understand and use Early Childhood Studies content, teaching and learning strategies include:

- breaking the language code to make meaning of Early Childhood Studies language and texts
- comprehending language and texts to make literal and inferred meanings about Early Childhood Studies content
- using Early Childhood Studies ideas and information in classroom, real-world and/or lifelike contexts to progress their own learning.

To analyse and evaluate Early Childhood Studies content, teaching and learning strategies include:

- making conclusions about the purpose and audience of Early Childhood Studies language and texts
- analysing the ways language is used to convey ideas and information in Early Childhood Studies texts
- transforming language and texts to convey Early Childhood Studies ideas and information in particular ways to suit audience and purpose.

Relevant aspects of literacy knowledge and skills are assessed, as described in the standards.

Numeracy in Early Childhood Studies

Numeracy is about using mathematics to make sense of the world and applying mathematics in a context for a social purpose.

Numeracy encompasses the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that students need to use mathematics in a wide range of situations. Numeracy involves students recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world and having the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully.[3]

Although much of the explicit teaching of numeracy skills occurs in Mathematics, being numerate involves using mathematical skills across the curriculum. Therefore, a commitment to numeracy development is an essential component of teaching and learning across the curriculum and a responsibility for all teachers.

To understand and use Early Childhood Studies content, teaching and learning strategies include:

- identifying the specific mathematical information in their learning area
- providing learning experiences and opportunities that support the application of students' general mathematical knowledge and problem-solving processes
- communicating and representing the language of numeracy in teaching, as appropriate.

Relevant aspects of numeracy knowledge and skills are assessed, as described in the standards.

[3] ACARA, General Capabilities, Numeracy, www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/GeneralCapabilities/Numeracy/Introduction/Introduction

1.2.3 Planning a course of study

Early Childhood Studies is a four-unit course of study.

Units 1 and 2 of the course are designed to allow students to begin their engagement with the course content, i.e. the knowledge, understanding and skills of the subject. Course content, learning experiences and assessment increase in complexity across the four units as students develop greater independence as learners.

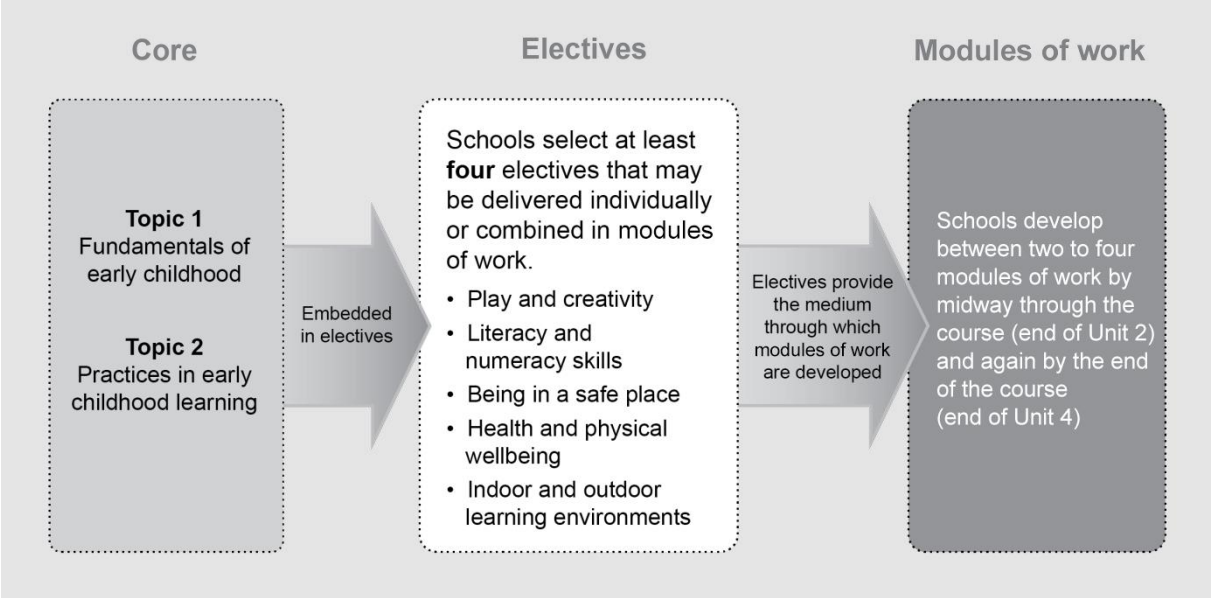
Units 3 and 4 consolidate student learning.

The minimum number of hours of timetabled school time, including assessment, for a course of study developed from this Applied syllabus is 55 hours per unit. A course of study will usually be completed over four units (220 hours).

A course of study for Early Childhood Studies includes:

- all core concepts and ideas evident by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4)
- core topics embedded in at least four electives
- two to four modules of work by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4)
- opportunities by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4) for students to:
  - interact with children in early childhood settings
  - devise at least two play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs, with one play-based learning activity implemented with children aged from birth to five years.

Figure 2: A course of study — the relationship between core, electives and modules of work



1.2.4 Developing a module of work

Modules of work are developed to enable students to gain knowledge, understanding and skills about early childhood learning. Students should appreciate the dynamic world of early childhood learning and the importance of providing quality early childhood education and care services for children aged from birth to five years.

Schools consider their own resources and needs, as well as the interests and abilities of their students and the local community when developing modules of work for a four-unit course of study.

Modules of work should include opportunities for:

- teaching, learning and assessment of the objectives for Knowing and understanding, Analysing and applying, and Planning and evaluating
- a variety of learning experiences that challenge, vary in content, duration and degree of difficulty over the four-unit course of study
- the core concepts and ideas to be embedded in at least four electives — not all core concepts and ideas are needed to be evident in each unit of work
- two to four modules of work by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4).

Interacting with children in early childhood education and care services

Students are to implement one play-based learning activity with children, aged from birth to five years, by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4).

They are to have opportunity to interact with children aged from birth to five years. The purpose of this interaction is to observe children, to gain experience in relating to children and have the opportunity to study and understand core practices in early childhood learning in authentic and real-world settings.

Interaction with children can occur through excursions and visits to quality early childhood settings. Locations for excursions and visits may include: education and care services such as childcare centres, playgrounds, playgroups, family day care, Under 8s Week, kindergartens, children's hospitals, community welfare organisations and child therapy centres. Students can also view videos or invite local families/carers with young children or Early Childhood education and care professionals to visit the school.

When choosing excursions and visits, teachers should be sensitive to the needs and requirements of the location and consider the suitability and appropriateness of it for the class group. Teachers should consider the quality of the early childhood education and care services to ensure useful and meaningful experiences for students. Students should be given specific tasks or observations to be made that relate to their course of study in Early Childhood Studies.

1.2.5 Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives

The Queensland Government has a vision that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have their cultures affirmed, heritage sustained and the same prospects for health, prosperity and quality of life as other Queenslanders. The QCAA is committed to helping achieve this vision, and encourages teachers to include Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in the curriculum.

The QCAA recognises Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their traditions, histories and experiences from before European settlement and colonisation through to the present time. Opportunities exist in Early Childhood Studies to encourage engagement with

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, strengthening students' appreciation and understanding of:

- frameworks of knowledge and ways of learning
- contexts in which Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples live
- contributions to Australian society and cultures.

In Early Childhood Studies, teachers and students should have opportunities to build cultural competence by understanding, communicating and effectively interacting with people across all cultures, but particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. This cultural competence is achieved through honest engagement, building trust, and working with local community members.

Guidelines about Aboriginal perspectives and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and resources for teaching are available at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives.

2 Subject matter

2.1 Core

The core learning for Early Childhood Studies is described through two core topics:

- Core topic 1: Fundamentals of early childhood
- Core topic 2: Practices in early childhood learning.

The core topics consist of concepts and ideas, and associated knowledge, understanding and skills and are presented in tables below. To support schools in the development of their study plans, codes (letters and numbers) have been provided for core topics, concepts and ideas. Each core topic has its own letter, and each concept and idea has its own number, as outlined below:

- **F**undamentals of early childhood — **F1** to **F6**
- **P**ractices in early childhood — **P1** to **P4**.

All concepts and ideas and associated knowledge, understanding and skills of core topics are to be taught by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4). Core concepts and ideas are progressively developed across the course of study through the associated knowledge, understanding and skills.

The core topics are embedded through electives and developed in modules of work (see Developing a module of work). This provides opportunities for learning to be delivered in authentic and real-world settings and enables students to develop a depth and breadth of understanding about early childhood learning and early childhood education and care services.

2.1.1 Core topic 1: Fundamentals of early childhood

Focus	
Fundamentals of early childhood describe concepts and ideas, and associated knowledge, understanding and skills related to early childhood learning. Fundamentals of early childhood learning underpin the practices in early childhood learning.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
F1 [4]**.** Growth and development includes the developmental milestones, similarities and differences that children experience aged from birth to five years.	• Children's learning is holistic; individual children develop at different rates. • Areas of development include physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. • The developmental milestones and areas of development may overlap and the development in one area is reinforced and enhanced by growth in another. • Understanding children's development and learning can be assisted by the work of theorists, e.g. Piaget and Erikson. • Many factors may be considered when determining uniqueness and individuality. • External factors influence the growth and development of children and include environmental, biological, interpersonal relationships, and early environments and experiences. • Children are active learners who problem solve and investigate, make choices and organise resources for learning and explore tools, technologies and information and communication technologies (ICTs).
F2. Relationships are the foundations for the construction of a child's identity.	• Building a sense of security and trust, confident self-identity and acting with increasing independence and perseverance are foundations for the construction of identity through relationships. • Nurturing relationships directly affects how children form their identity and their sense of belonging. • Observing interactions between children and their peers and adults provides opportunities to see how engaged they are in their environment and in their play.
F3. Children are connected with and contribute to their world through respecting diversity, social responsibility and being aware of fairness.	• Early childhood educators support children to connect with and contribute to their world by appreciating differences in family choices, e.g. child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families. • Children have an awareness of respecting diversity, which includes recognising and appreciating uniqueness and differences in values, beliefs, histories, cultures, languages, traditions. They have an awareness about being fair, and a sense of their own rights and responsibilities. • Children have an awareness of respect for the environment. • The additional needs of children include having a disability, living in complex or vulnerable circumstances and their cultural, linguistic or family background.
F4. Children who have a positive wellbeing are connected, optimistic and confident.	• Wellbeing is building a sense of happiness, effective social interactions and includes the dispositions of courage and resilience. • Children should have increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing. • Children should become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing. • Wellbeing explores ways to show care and concern and interact positively with others.

[4] Concepts and ideas are coded to support schools in the development of their study plans.

F5. Policies, frameworks and guidelines influence and enhance early childhood and education care services.	• Relevant national, state and local government policies and regulations, guidelines and frameworks influence the operations of early childhood education and care services. • Early childhood education and care services develop policies and procedures as required by relevant policies, guidelines and frameworks.
F6. Pathways to early childhood education and care services are many and varied.	• Careers working with children require training and qualifications, references, criminal checks and first-aid certificates. • Early childhood education and care services are different and unique and are accessed for different reasons. • Collaborative relationships between early childhood educators and families/carers are essential.

2.1.2 Core topic 2: Practices in early childhood learning

Focus	
Practices in early childhood learning describe concepts and ideas, and associated knowledge, understanding and skills and are the actions or processes used in early childhood learning. Practices in early childhood learning interrelate with each other and the fundamentals of early childhood.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
P1[5]**.** Play-based learning is a context for learning through which children explore, experiment, discover and solve problems to make sense of their world as they engage actively with people, objects and representations.	• Play-based learning values and develops children's curiosity, interests, skills, abilities, culture and knowledge in order to extend their learning. • Play-based learning is inclusive of the developmental milestones, supported by current research and provides learning environments that foster quality play experiences. • Characteristics of play-based learning are child-centred, peer initiated, teacher guided/supported/scaffolded and intentional.
P2. Responsiveness includes knowing and accepting children and respecting that they are unique individuals.	• There are responsive and inclusive ways to interact and communicate with children. • Being aware and responding to each individual child's strengths, abilities and emerging interests assists to further extend their learning.
P3. An active learning environment encourages opportunities for children to explore and interact with the environment.	• High-quality active learning environments have clearly identifiable characteristics such as being challenging and safe, have flexible space and allow time to pursue own ideas, to make choices and experience a variety of learning opportunities. • Quality learning environments may be accessed through experiences such as visiting early childhood education and care settings, viewing videos, inviting visits from families/carers with children, and undertaking excursions or inviting visits from early childhood education and care educators.
P4. Observations are used for gathering information about children's learning. The technique involves watching and listening to children, as well as interacting with children deliberately and purposefully to interpret children's learning across a range of contexts.	• Observation is used to develop a profile of the individual child to inform planning for learning through play. • Observation requires guidelines for confidential observation and recording of children's development. • There are a variety of techniques to be used for recording information about children.

[5] Concepts and ideas are coded to support schools in the development of their study plans.

2.2 Electives

Electives provide opportunities to build on underpinning core concepts and ideas and explore early childhood learning through different lenses that influence the development of children. Students gain a well-developed understanding of the multifaceted, diverse and significant nature of early childhood learning and awareness of the important role of early childhood educators in child development.

There are five electives; schools choose at least four electives and they may be delivered individually or combined in modules of work (see Developing a module of work). The electives are presented in tables below on the following pages:

- Elective 1: Play and creativity
- Elective 2: Literacy and numeracy skills
- Elective 3: Being in a safe place
- Elective 4: Health and physical wellbeing
- Elective 5: Indoor and outdoor learning environments.

The electives are described through concepts and ideas, and associated knowledge, understanding and skills. These are suggested only and provide a guide to the development of modules of work in a four-unit course of study.

2.2.1 Elective 1: Play and creativity

Focus	
Play and creativity involves opportunities for children to explore, imagine, investigate and engage in purposeful and meaningful experiences. Play and creativity provides opportunities for exploration and discovery, trying out new ideas, new ways of thinking and problem-solving through fun and enjoyable activities. Play and creativity is essential for a child's development, for learning and for life skills.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
Play and creativity are the foundation of learning and developing physical, social, emotional and intellectual skills.	• Play is an active, child-initiated process that supports children's learning through creativity, scientific thinking, numeracy, literacy and arts. • When planning and implementing play-based learning activities, safety requirements and active supervision by adults are important considerations. • There are different types of play and children can be involved in more than one type at any time. • Play as learning requires facilitation and interaction by adults in the play space. • Observation of children when playing and being creative enables a child's profile to be developed and informs planning for play-based learning activities in play and creativity. • When choosing a career to work with children, knowledge and training in developing and extending play and creativity in early years learning is required.
Creativity is about thinking, exploring, discovering, and imagination.	• Creativity has many definitions. • Children, who feel free to make choices and to explore, solve problems and investigate will feel free to invent, create, and find new ways to do things. • A creative approach will encourage children to have the confidence to air new ideas and develop them as far as possible, learn from past experiences and relate this learning to new situations. • Ways to encourage creativity are to ask open-ended questions, model creative thinking and behaviour, and encourage experimentation and persistence. • Benefits to young children of engaging in creativity include lateral thinking, problem solving, risk taking, aesthetic awareness and building a confident self-identity.
Play and creativity supports diversity through helping children to feel good about themselves, their families, and their communities.	• Participation in play and creativity allows opportunities to explore stereotypes and differences. • Exposing children to differences, things that are unfamiliar, and experiences beyond their immediate lives is important when exploring play and creativity. • An inclusive environment for creativity considers entitlement, planning and equal opportunities.

Learning environments that encourage approaches to creativity and offer age-appropriate play equipment enhance children's development.	• Ways to nurture creativity include providing a responsive physical environment, (e.g. time, space, and equipment), with opportunities for exposure to, and exploration of, the arts and other activities. • When nurturing creativity it is important to value the process over the product, to nurture a child's self-expression and to accept and foster individual creative approaches. • Approaches for creative self-expression include visual arts, (e.g. collage, playdough, painting, and drawing), music and singing, use of language, movement, dance and dramatic play. • Environments that foster creativity have play that involves imaginative roles and free-choice activities, e.g. aligned to children's current interests and motivation and children who are actively involved in their own learning. • Play equipment should promote meaningful learning, respectful play and respect for a sustainable environment. • The importance of appreciating and caring for play equipment is acknowledged. • There are established features of learning environments and play equipment that encourage creativity in children. • That technology can be a basis for play and creativity is understood.

2.2.2 Elective 2: Literacy and numeracy skills

Focus	
Literacy and numeracy skills give children a way to communicate, expand and express their imagination, foster their capability to use problem-solving strategies and learn new information. Everyday activities and environments contribute to literacy and numeracy learning. In an increasingly complex world, being able to read, write, add, subtract, divide and multiply is crucial; children need to be both literate and numerate.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
Literacy and numeracy skills enhance children's ability to learn and succeed.	• There are specific definitions and expectations of literacy skills and numeracy skills for early childhood learners. • Literacy and numeracy skill development is a central component of early childhood programs. • Programs to promote children's literacy and numeracy skill development should be based on an understanding of: – child development and appreciation that literacy and numeracy skill development begins in the first years of life and is a continuous developmental process – current research on young children's development – the programs should occur in real-world settings for real purposes, e.g. recounting personal experiences, measuring ingredients – cultural diversity of families, e.g. recognising Aboriginal peoples and Torres strait Islander peoples cultures and other cultures from outside Australia. • The development of literacy and numeracy skills within a program requires consideration of the relevant policies and development and implementation of required procedures. • Observation of children when completing play-based learning activities with literacy and numeracy skills as a focus enables a child's profile to be developed and informs planning for play-based learning activities to develop literacy and numeracy skills. • When choosing a career to work with children knowledge and training in the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills for early years learning is required.
Selection of appropriate tools encourages and supports literacy and numeracy skill development in children.	• Activities to promote literacy and numeracy skills may include talking, singing, reading and making books, games, imaginative play, poetry, rhyme and finger rhymes, drawing and everyday activities. • Development of literacy skills involves learning to use oral forms of language (e.g. listening and speaking/signing) and exploring and making sense of written forms, (e.g. reading and writing). • Early literacy behaviours may include understanding how books are structured and read, looking and recognising, picture and story comprehension, and story-reading behaviours. • Interactions that young children have with literacy materials, such as books, paper and crayons are the building blocks for language, reading and writing development. • Development of numeracy skills involves comparing, e.g. (more, fewer, the same), counting, space, filling and emptying, fitting things together and taking them apart, changing shape and arrangement of objects, experiencing and describing positions, directions and distances, and interpreting spatial relations. • Literacy and numeracy skill development follows a typical learning trajectory for most children, but not all children. • Children learn at different rates, in different ways and at different times and may require different activities to foster development.

Educators need to be knowledgeable and purposeful to support, nurture, and develop literacy and numeracy skills.	• Educators play a critical role in influencing the positive development of literacy and numeracy skills in young children through quality early childhood learning and relationships. • To strengthen literacy and language development in young children, families/carers and educators need to collaborate and understand how literacy and numeracy skills are acquired at different stages in children's development. • Many factors affect children's literacy and numeracy skills/ability e.g. English as an additional language or dialect (EAALD). • When children have a range of quality experiences they build their vocabulary, develop their communication skills, make sense of words, symbols, shapes and numbers, notice and ask questions about the world around them.

2.2.3 Elective 3: Being in a safe place

Focus	
As children are often absorbed in their own immediate interests; they are not aware of their surroundings and consequences of the many new situations that they encounter daily. Children need to feel that their world is a safe place.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
At all times it is important to protect children from harm and promote children's psychological wellbeing.	• Children have a right to feel safe, (mental health safety) and be safe, (physical safety) at all times, and that families/carers and educators play a part in protecting young children. • Early childhood mental health is about children's social, emotional and behavioural wellbeing. • Good mental health in early childhood lays the foundations for positive mental health and wellbeing. • Different children have different mental and physical safety considerations. • Observation of the learning environment and the preparation of play-based learning experiences inform planning for play-based learning activities that educate and support children being in a safe place. • When choosing a career to work with children, knowledge and training in mental and physical safety for early years learning are required.
Children's behaviour is influenced by different factors.	• Influences on children's behaviour include: – developmental milestones of the child – family values and attitudes – cultural beliefs and expectations – child-rearing practices – behaviour modification strategies.
Safe environments are central to maintaining children's physical and mental wellbeing.	• A safe physical environment is provided by implementing strategies that reduce risk and highlight potential hazards, sun protection, maintenance of equipment, road and pedestrian safety, setting up indoor and outdoor environments, fire evacuation procedures, disposal of waste, storage of cleaning materials and safe sleeping practices. • A safe mental health environment is provided by reducing risk factors and building protective factors in children by valuing home life, home language and culture. • Importance of clean and hygienic environments and children learning hygiene practices should be promoted.
Early childhood educators have a responsibility to ensure the physical and mental safety of children when they are attending early childhood services.	• Safe supervision of children considers legal requirements, ratios of adults to children and traffic flows. • Policies and procedures for responding to threats or danger to physical and psychological wellbeing, consider: – strengthening children's resilience through relationships – being hazard aware, not risk-adverse – developing risk management strategies – regularly monitoring and assessing the environment – continuing professional education in child safety. • Developing procedures and processes for ensuring the safety of children when attending early childhood service for situations such as emergency evacuation, children on excursions, and children and illness. • Injuries that most commonly occur in early childhood education and care services may include falls (e.g. mostly from playground equipment); products (e.g. furniture and toys); and impacts from another person (e.g. child-to-child collision); and cuts and lacerations.

2.2.4 Elective 4: Health and physical wellbeing

Focus	
Healthy eating and participating in physical activity are cornerstones to living a healthy life; the foundations are set down in early childhood and significantly influence the eating habits and physical activity habits of adults. Good nutrition and being involved in physical activity underpins children's holistic development.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
Government policies and regulations, strategies and guidelines provide information that informs health and physical wellbeing.	• Definition of nutrition, physical activity and healthy habits as they underpin a healthy life. • Specific policies that relate to health and wellbeing: – *Australian Dietary Guidelines* (2013) – *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* – *National Physical Activity Recommendations for Children 0–5*. • The recommendations in the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* and *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating* foster food choices for good health and reduce the risk of health problems. • The early development of good habits may lead to healthy behaviours that will last into later years, and regular physical activity in early childhood can impact on immediate and long-term health outcomes. • Observation of children participating in physical activities enables a child's profile to be developed and informs planning for play-based learning activities that develop physical and health wellbeing. • When choosing a career to work with children, knowledge and training of health and physical wellbeing of children is required.
Nutritional needs and physical activity change with different ages of children.	• Different ages of a child will influence and determine the different nutritional needs and physical requirements.
Educators and early childhood education and care services support and foster good nutrition and involvement in physical activity.	• Early childhood education and care services should have: – policies and procedures around food choices and safety, physical activity types, and safety and equity principles that consider culture and traditions of children at the setting – considered legal requirements for the *National Quality Framework* and standards – appropriate resources to support good eating habits and physical activity for both indoor and outdoor activities – a curriculum that implements age-appropriate activities that encourage good eating habits and involvement in physical activity – an education program for families/carers to support them to foster healthy lifestyle habits in children. • Early childhood educators should know the children and their families/carers, actively work with them to implement a healthy lifestyle habits for children's education program, and keep abreast of current research in food and nutrition and physical activities and children's development.

2.2.5 Elective 5: Indoor and outdoor learning environments

Focus	
A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. Children need to access both indoor and outdoor spaces. They spend a lot of time both indoors and outdoors and therefore both environments should be inviting, challenging and fun.	
Concepts and ideas	**Knowledge, understanding and skills**
The indoor and outdoor environments should make children feel safe, secure and be inviting spaces where children can confidently play and learn.	• Definition of a learning environment is the natural and constructed environments, both indoors and outdoors. • Environments affect moods, ability to form relationships, effectiveness of play, and even health and, therefore, need to be high quality. • Environments provide opportunities for physical, intellectual, social and emotional development. • When creating indoor and outdoor environments for education and care services, relevant polices are to be considered and procedures developed and implemented. • Effective environments: – provide variety and different experiences and are resourced – create a sense of belonging, are age appropriate and are flexible to meet the needs of children – encourage independent exploration and appropriate risk taking, and allow play-based activities – foster children's ability to make choices and decisions – allow children to be mentally and physically safe – encourage 'children's capacity to understand and respect the natural environment and the interdependence between people, plants, animals and the land'[6] – respect diversity and have opportunities to explore cultures, gender roles, family structures, people with disabilities and challenge stereotypes. • Indoor and outdoor play are equally important and provide opportunities to extend learning across both environments. • Risk taking should be a part of childhood, so the importance of being hazard-aware, not risk-adverse should be promoted. There are benefits to risk; however, they need to be handled with due consideration of the risk, rather than eliminating risk altogether. • Observation of children in both indoor and outdoor environments enables a child's profile to be developed and inform planning for future play-based learning activities for either indoor or outdoor environments. • When choosing a career to work with children, knowledge and training in providing quality indoor and outdoor learning environments is required.
Being outdoors has a positive impact on children's sense of wellbeing and development.	• Outdoor environments offer opportunities for doing things in different ways and on different scales than when indoors. • In outdoor environments, young children have first-hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world. • Outdoor environments can be natural, (e.g. an element of vegetation, forests, wooded areas, creeks) or constructed, (e.g. playgrounds). • Creating an outdoor learning environment requires consideration of physical features, play-based activity programs, child development, digital technology, and sustainability.

[6] Council of Australian Governments. (2009). *Belonging, being & becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Canberra: DEEWR.

Being indoors has a positive impact on children's sense of wellbeing and development.	• Indoor space needs careful planning to be flexible to accommodate children's changing interests and needs. Consider: – areas that invite a variety of types of play and foster social interaction as well as areas for personal space – materials and equipment that children can access themselves and storage for children to put their things away – resources that encourage a range of learning – opportunities for displays that children can add to, such as with family photos; hands-on activities; and opportunities to engage in sensory learning – appropriateness to the stage of development of the child – using technology.

3 Assessment

3.1 Assessment — general information

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. It is the purposeful, systematic and ongoing collection of information about student learning outlined in the syllabus.

The major purposes of assessment are to:

- promote, assist and improve learning
- inform programs of teaching and learning
- advise students about their own progress to help them achieve as well as they are able
- give information to parents, carers and teachers about the progress and achievements of individual students to help them achieve as well as they are able
- provide comparable exit results in each Applied syllabus which may contribute credit towards a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE); and may contribute towards Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) calculations
- provide information about how well groups of students are achieving for school authorities and the State Minister responsible for Education.

Student responses to assessment opportunities provide a collection of evidence on which judgments about the quality of student learning are made. The quality of student responses is judged against the standards described in the syllabus.

In Applied syllabuses, assessment is standards-based. The standards are described for each objective in each of the three dimensions. The standards describe the quality and characteristics of student work across five levels from A to E.

3.1.1 Planning an assessment program

When planning an assessment program over a developmental four-unit course, schools should:

- administer assessment instruments at suitable intervals throughout the course
- provide students with opportunities in Units 1 and 2 to become familiar with the assessment techniques that will be used in Units 3 and 4
- assess all of the dimensions in each unit
- assess each objective at least twice by midway through the course (end of Unit 2) and again by the end of the course (end of Unit 4)
- assess only what the students have had the opportunity to learn, as prescribed in the syllabus and outlined in the study plan.

For a student who studies four units, only assessment evidence from Units 3 and 4 contributes towards decisions at exit.

Further guidance can be found in the QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook.

3.1.2 Authentication of student work

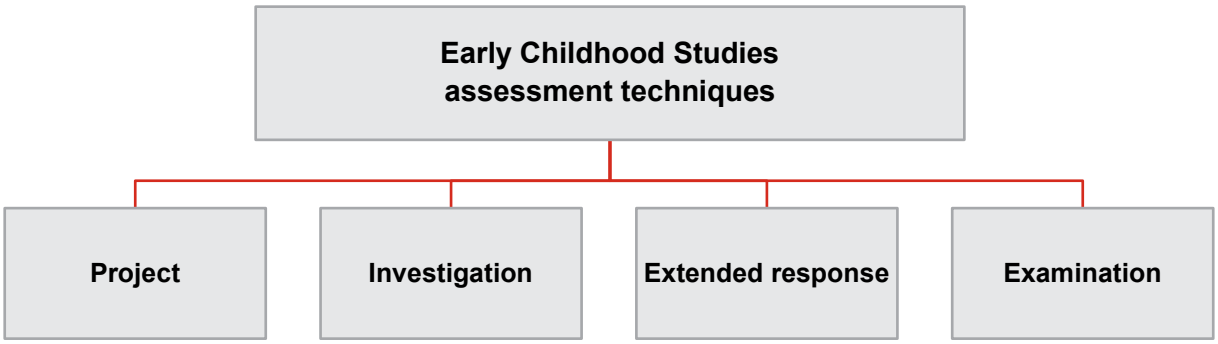
Schools and teachers must have strategies in place for ensuring that work submitted for summative assessment is the student's own. Judgments about student achievement are based on evidence of the demonstration of student knowledge, understanding and skills. Schools ensure responses are validly each student's own work.

Guidance about authentication strategies which includes guidance for drafting, scaffolding and teacher feedback can be found in the QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook.

3.2 Assessment techniques

The diagram below identifies the assessment techniques relevant to this syllabus. The subsequent sections describe each assessment technique in detail.

Figure 3: Early Childhood Studies assessment techniques



Schools design assessment instruments from the assessment techniques relevant to this syllabus. The assessment instruments students respond to in Units 1 and 2 should support those techniques included in Units 3 and 4.

For each assessment instrument, schools develop an instrument-specific standards matrix by selecting the syllabus standards descriptors relevant to the task and the dimension/s being assessed (see Standards matrix).

The matrix is used as a tool for making judgments about the quality of students' responses to the instrument and is developed using the syllabus standards descriptors. Assessment is designed to allow students to demonstrate the range of standards (see Determining an exit result). Teachers give students an instrument-specific standards matrix for each assessment instrument.

Where students undertake assessment in a group or team, instruments must be designed so that teachers can validly assess the work of individual students and not apply a judgment of the group product and processes to all individuals.

Evidence

Evidence includes the student's responses to assessment instruments and the teacher's annotated instrument-specific standards matrixes. Evidence may be direct, e.g. student responses to assessment instruments, or indirect, e.g. supporting documentation. Within a student folio indirect evidence should be balanced with direct evidence.

Further guidance can be found in the QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook.

Conditions of assessment

Over a four-unit course of study, students are required to complete assessment under a range of conditions (see Planning an assessment program).

Conditions may vary according to assessment. They should be stated clearly on assessment instruments, for example:

- supervised or unsupervised
- individual, group or team
- time allowed (with perusal time as needed)
- length required
- seen or unseen questions
- using sources and/or notes (open book).

Where support materials or particular equipment, tools or technologies are used under supervised conditions, schools must ensure that the purpose of supervised conditions (i.e. to authenticate student work) is maintained.

Assessment of group work

When students undertake assessment in a group or team, instruments must be designed so that teachers can validly assess the work of individual students and not apply a judgment of the group product and processes to all individuals.

3.2.1 Project

Purpose

This technique assesses a response to a single task, situation and/or scenario in a module of work that provides students with authentic and/or real-world opportunities to demonstrate their learning. The student response will consist of a collection of **at least two** assessable components, demonstrated in different circumstances, places and times, and may be presented to different audiences, and through differing modes.

Dimensions to be assessed

This assessment technique is to be used to determine student achievement in objectives from all of the following dimensions:

- Knowing and understanding
- Analysing and applying
- Planning and evaluating.

Not every objective from each dimension needs to be assessed.

A project

A project occurs over a set period of time. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response.

A project consists of **at least two** different assessable components from the following:

- written component, e.g. pamphlet for the audience, such as a newsletter for parents
- spoken component, e.g. evaluation of how the implemented play-based activity was responsive to children's needs
- multimodal component, e.g. a slideshow about planning decisions and evaluation of a play-based learning activity
- performance component, e.g. singing nursery rhymes to teach numeracy skills
- product component, e.g. props to support the play-based learning activity, such as finger puppets.

The selected assessable components must contribute significantly to the task and to the overall result for the project. A variety of technologies may be used in the creation or presentation of the response.

Note: Spoken delivery of a written component or a transcript of a spoken component (whether written, electronic, or digital) constitutes one component, not two.

Examples of a project in Early Childhood Studies include play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs:

- play: students plan and devise an imaginative play session (multimodal and spoken)
- creativity: students plan a painting/drawing activity (product and written)
- creativity: students plan a collage activity (product and spoken)
- literacy skills: students plan a story-telling session that includes props to enhance the story telling (performance and spoken)
- numeracy skills: students plan a water-play activity focusing on numeracy skills (written and product)
- being in a safe place: students plan an activity that uses a toy to encourage children's emotional wellbeing(product and written)
- physical development of fine/gross motor skills: students plan and devise an obstacle course (multimodal and written)
- indoor and outdoor learning environments: students plan a sensory playdough experience for children (product and written).

Written component

This component requires students to use written language to communicate ideas and information to readers for a particular purpose. A written component may be supported by data, tables, flow charts or diagrams and, where appropriate, references.

Examples include:

- journal, e.g. ongoing record that documents planning, justification and evaluation for the selected play-based learning activity
- articles for magazines or journals
- essays, e.g. informative
- letters, e.g. to editors, parents, childcare centres
- reports, which will normally be presented with section headings, and may include tables, graphs and/or diagrams, analysis of data and, where appropriate, supported by references.

Spoken component

This component requires students to use spoken language to communicate ideas and information to a live or virtual audience (that is, through the use of technology) for a particular purpose.

Examples include:

- oral presentations
- debates
- interviews
- podcasts
- seminars.

Multimodal component

This component requires students to use a combination of at least two modes **delivered at the same time** to communicate ideas and information to a live or virtual audience for a particular purpose. The selected modes are integrated to allow both modes to contribute significantly to the multimodal component. Modes include:

- written
- spoken/signed
- nonverbal, e.g. physical and visual.

Examples include:

- storyboard with annotations, e.g.
  - a storyboard is a graphic representation of how your play-based learning activity will unfold. It is made up of a number of squares with illustrations or pictures representing each part of your play-based learning activity
  - annotations that detail the relationships and consider the interrelationships between the fundamentals and practices in early childhood learning, establish how the play-based learning activity is responsive to children's needs, and have sound reasons or evidence for how the play-based learning activities respond to children's needs (this is evidence of planning only)
- sketches with annotations, e.g.
  - a series of sketches outlining a selected play-based learning activity
  - annotations that detail the relationships and consider the interrelationships between the fundamentals and practices in early childhood learning, establish how the play-based learning activity is responsive to children's needs, have sound reasons or evidence for how the play-based learning activities respond to children's needs (this is evidence of planning only)
- digital presentations
- vodcasts, seminars, webinars.

A variety of technologies may be used in the creation or presentation of the component. Replication of a written document into an electronic or digital format does not constitute a multimodal component.

Performance component

This component refers to physical demonstrations to support play-based learning activities and will be the outcome of applying a range of cognitive and creative skills.

Performance components involve student application of identified skill/s when responding to a task that involves solving a problem, providing a solution, or conveying meaning or intent.

In Early Childhood Studies, a performance component may consist of students 'modelling by doing' activities such as storytelling, singing nursery rhymes, reading out loud to children.

Product component

This component refers to the production of props to support play-based learning activities and will be the outcome of applying a range of cognitive and creative skills.

Product components involve student application of identified skill/s in creating activities to be used when implementing play-based learning activities that are responsive to children's needs. Examples may include: sensory play with jelly, a pipe cleaner maze, a water balloon pool, playdough, stick people, or stand-up alphabets.

Assessment conditions	Units 1–2	Units 3–4
Written component	400–700 words	500–900 words
Spoken component	1½ – 3½ minutes	2½ – 3½ minutes
Multimodal component	2–4 minutes	3–6 minutes
Performance component	Schools provide students with some continuous class time to develop and demonstrate the performance component/s of the project.	
Product component	Schools provide students with some continuous class time to develop and demonstrate the product component/s of the project.	

Further guidance

- It is the responsibility of teachers and students to present the evidence to support the standard awarded.
- Supporting evidence may include:
  - annotated instrument-specific standards
  - visual evidence for product/performance
  - written documentation.
- Allow class time for the student to effectively undertake each component of the project assessment. Independent student time will be required to complete the task.
- The required length of student responses should be considered in the context of the tasks.
- Implement strategies to promote the authenticity of student work. Strategies may include note-taking, drafting, and/or teacher observation sheets.
- Scaffolding is part of the teaching and learning that supports student development of the requisite knowledge, understanding and skills integral to completing an assessment task and demonstrating what the assessment is requiring. The scaffolding should be reduced in Units 3 and 4 as students develop greater independence as learners.
- Provide students with learning experiences in the use of appropriate communication strategies.

3.2.2 Investigation

Purpose

This technique assesses investigative practices and the outcomes of applying these practices. Investigation includes locating and using information beyond students' own knowledge and the data they have been given. In Early Childhood Studies, investigations involve research and follow an inquiry approach. Investigations provide opportunity for assessment to be authentic and set in lifelike contexts.

Dimensions to be assessed

This assessment technique is to be used to determine student achievement in objectives from all of the following dimensions:

- Knowing and understanding
- Analysing and applying
- Planning and evaluating.

Not every objective from each dimension needs to be assessed.

Types of investigations and responses

An investigation occurs over a set period of time. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response. In this assessment technique, students investigate and/or research a specific question the collection, analysis and synthesis of primary and/or secondary data obtained through research, including evaluation.

A specific question provides opportunities to analyse and evaluate concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning. Analysing dissects information to establish relationships and consider the interrelationships relevant to contexts and/or play-based learning activities. Evaluating assigns merit by considering the value, worth or quality of contexts and/or play-based learning activities in early childhood learning.

Examples of investigations in Early Childhood Studies include:

- Investigate National Quality Standards and how they have been implemented in a local education and care service.
- Investigate an aspect of a safety policy, i.e. sun safety, supervision, hygiene, and review how they have been enacted in a local early childhood education and care service.
- Investigate play-based learning and present reasons why it should underpin quality practice in an early childhood education and care service.

Written response

This response requires students to use written language to communicate ideas and information to readers for a particular purpose. A written component may be supported by data, tables, flow charts or diagrams and, where appropriate, references.

Examples include:

- an article for a magazine or journal, e.g. for an Early Childhood journal
- an essay, e.g. analytical, persuasive/argumentative, informative
- a letter, e.g. to an editor about childcare costs and quality, to parents informing them of changes in hygiene practices and advice at a centre, notices outside childcare centres about health risks
- a report, which will normally be presented with section headings, and may include tables, graphs and/or diagrams, analysis of data, and evaluation that assigns merit by considering the value, worth or quality of contexts and/or play-based learning activities in response to children's needs
- an observation journal, profiling an individual child to analyse and evaluate play-based learning activities that were observed.

Spoken response

This response requires students to use spoken language to communicate ideas and information to a live or virtual audience (that is, through the use of technology) for a particular purpose.

Examples include:

- oral presentations
- debates
- interviews
- podcasts
- seminars.

Multimodal response

This response requires students to use a combination of at least two modes **delivered at the same time** to communicate ideas and information to a live or virtual audience for a particular purpose. The selected modes are integrated to allow both modes to contribute significantly to the multimodal response. Modes include:

- written
- spoken/signed
- nonverbal, e.g. physical and visual.

Examples include:

- digital presentations
- vodcasts
- seminars
- webinars.

A variety of technologies may be used in the creation or presentation of the response. Replication of a written document into an electronic or digital format does not constitute a multimodal response.

When making judgments about multimodal responses, teachers apply the standards to the entire response, i.e. to all modes used to communicate the response.

Assessment conditions	Units 1–2	Units 3–4
Written	500–800 words	600–1000 words
Spoken	2–4 minutes	3–4 minutes
Multimodal	3–5 minutes	4–7 minutes

Further guidance

- An inquiry approach includes:
  - establishing a focus for the investigation, or working with the student to develop a focus
  - collecting data/information, i.e. observations, interviews with parents or educators, readings
  - analysing data/information
  - evaluating using information collected and analysed.
- It is the responsibility of teachers and students to present the evidence to support the standard awarded.
- Allow class time for the student to effectively undertake each stage of the investigation assessment. Independent student time will be required to complete the task.
- The required length of student responses should be considered in the context of the tasks.
- Implement strategies to promote the authenticity of student work. Strategies may include note-taking, drafting, and/or teacher observation sheets.
- Scaffolding is part of the teaching and learning that supports student development of the requisite knowledge, understanding and skills integral to completing an assessment task and demonstrating what the assessment is requiring. The scaffolding should be reduced in Units 3 and 4 as students develop greater independence as learners.
- Provide students with learning experiences in the use of appropriate communication strategies.

3.2.3 Extended response

Purpose

This technique assesses the interpretation, analysis/examination and/or evaluation of ideas and information in provided stimulus materials. While students may undertake some research in the writing of the extended response, it is not the focus of this technique.

Dimensions to be assessed

This assessment technique is to be used to determine student achievement in objectives from all of the following dimensions:

- Knowing and understanding
- Analysing and applying
- Planning and evaluating.

Not every objective from each dimension needs to be assessed.

Types of extended response

An extended response occurs over a set period of time. Students may use class time and their own time to develop a response. Students respond to a question or statement about the provided stimulus materials.

Stimulus material could include:

- case studies
- play equipment, materials manuals, pamphlets, handbooks, newsletters, prospectuses
- guest speakers and visitors (children, families/carers)
- cartoons, tables, statistics, graphs, charts, audio and video recordings (music/voice/dance)
- computer software, websites, films, television, newspapers, magazines
- legislative acts and regulations
- observations or records of children engaging in activities.

Written response

This response requires students to use written language to communicate ideas and information to readers for a particular purpose. A written component may be supported by data, tables, flow charts or diagrams and where appropriate references.

Examples include:

- brochure, e.g. informative for a particular audience, such as parents, and may include relevant illustrations, pictures, diagrams
- articles for magazines or journals
- letters, e.g. to parents, or to a toy manufacturer informing them of a safety issue
- essays, e.g. analytical, persuasive/argumentative, informative
- reports, which will normally be presented with section headings, and may include tables, graphs and/or diagrams, analysis of data supported by references, including evaluation.

Spoken response

This response requires students to use spoken language to communicate ideas and information to a live or virtual audience (that is, through the use of technology) for a particular purpose.

Examples include:

- oral presentations
- debates
- interviews
- podcasts
- seminars.

Multimodal response

This response requires students to use a combination of at least two modes **delivered at the same time** to communicate ideas and information to a live or virtual audience for a particular purpose. The selected modes are integrated to allow both modes to contribute significantly to the multimodal response. Modes include:

- written
- spoken/signed
- nonverbal, e.g. physical and visual.

Examples include:

- digital presentations
- vodcasts
- seminars
- webinars.

A variety of technologies may be used in the creation or presentation of the response. Replication of a written document into an electronic or digital format does not constitute a multimodal response.

When making judgments about multimodal responses, teachers apply the standards to the entire response, i.e. to all modes used to communicate the response.

Assessment conditions	Units 1–2	Units 3–4
Written	500–800 words	600–1000 words
Spoken	2–4 minutes	3–4 minutes
Multimodal	3–5 minutes	4–7 minutes

Further guidance

- It is the responsibility of teachers and students to present the evidence to support the standard awarded.
- Provide stimulus for students and establish a focus for each extended response, or work with students to select suitable stimulus and/or develop a focus for each extended response.
- Allow class time for the student to effectively undertake each component of the extended response assessment. Independent student time will be required to complete the task.
- The required length of student responses should be considered in the context of the tasks.
- Implement strategies to promote the authenticity of student work. Strategies may include note-taking, drafting, and/or teacher observation sheets.
- Scaffolding is part of the teaching and learning that supports student development of the requisite knowledge, understanding and skills integral to completing an assessment task and demonstrating what the assessment is requiring. The scaffolding should be reduced in Units 3 and 4 as students develop greater independence as learners.
- Provide students with learning experiences in the use of appropriate communication strategies.

3.2.4 Examination

Purpose

This technique assesses the application of a range of cognition to provided questions, scenarios and/or problems. Responses are completed individually, under supervised conditions and in a set timeframe.

Dimensions to be assessed

This assessment technique is to be used to determine student achievement in objectives from all of the following dimensions:

- Knowing and understanding
- Analysing and applying
- Planning and evaluating.

Not every objective from each dimension needs to be assessed.

Type of examination

Short response test

- Short response tests typically consist of a number of items that may include students responding to some or all of the following activities:
  - drawing, labelling or interpreting equipment, graphs, tables or diagrams
  - responding to seen or unseen stimulus materials
  - interpreting ideas and information.
- Short response tests occur under supervised conditions as students produce work individually and in a set time to ensure authenticity.
- Questions, scenarios and problems are typically unseen. If seen, teachers must ensure the purpose of this technique is not compromised.
- Stimulus materials may also be used and may be seen or unseen.
- Unseen questions, statements or stimulus materials should not be copied from information or texts that students have previously been exposed to or have directly used in class.

Assessment conditions	Units 1–2	Units 3–4
Recommended duration	60–90 minutes	60–90 minutes
Short response test	50–150 words per item (diagrams and workings not included in word count)	50–250 words per item (diagrams and workings not included in word count)

Further guidance

- Format the assessment to allow for ease of reading and responding.
- Consider the language needs of the students and avoid ambiguity.
- Ensure questions allow the full range of standards to be demonstrated.
- Consider the instrument conditions in relation to the requirements of the question/stimulus.
- Outline any permitted material in the instrument conditions, e.g. one page of handwritten notes.
- Determine appropriate use of stimulus materials and student notes. Ensure stimulus materials are succinct enough to allow students to engage with them in the time provided; if they are lengthy, consider giving students access to them before the assessment.
- Provide students with learning experiences that support the types of items, including opportunities to respond to unseen tasks using appropriate communication strategies.
- Indicate on the assessment the dimensions and objectives that will be assessed, and explain the instrument-specific standards matrix.

3.3 Exiting a course of study

3.3.1 Folio requirements

A folio is a collection of one student's responses to the assessment instruments on which exit results are based. The folio is updated when earlier assessment responses are replaced with later evidence that is more representative of student achievement.

3.3.2 Exit folios

The exit folio is the collection of evidence of student work from Units 3 and 4 that is used to determine the student's exit result. Each folio must include:

- four assessment instruments, and the student responses
- evidence of student work from Units 3 and 4 only
- evidence of all dimensions being assessed in each assessment instrument
- two projects, each from a different elective, including one project implemented with children aged from birth to 5 years
- a student profile completed to date.

3.3.3 Exit standards

Exit standards are used to make judgments about students' exit result from a course of study. The standards are described in the same dimensions as the objectives of the syllabus. The standards describe how well students have achieved the objectives and are stated in the standards matrix.

The following dimensions must be used:

- Dimension 1: Knowing and understanding
- Dimension 2: Analysing and applying
- Dimension 3: Planning and evaluating.

Each dimension must be assessed in each unit, and each dimension is to make an equal contribution to the determination of an exit result.

3.3.4 Determining an exit result

When students exit the course of study, the school is required to award each student an A—E exit result.

Exit results are summative judgments made when students exit the course of study. For most students this will be after four units. For these students, judgments are based on exit folios providing evidence of achievement in relation to all objectives of the syllabus and standards.

For students who exit before completing four units judgments are made based on the evidence of achievement to that stage of the course of study.

Determining a standard

The standard awarded is an on-balance judgment about how the qualities of the student's responses match the standards descriptors in each dimension. This means that it is not necessary for the student's responses to have been matched to every descriptor for a particular standard in each dimension.

Awarding an exit result

When standards have been determined in each of the dimensions for this subject, Table 2 below is used to award an exit result, where A represents the highest standard and E the lowest. The table indicates the minimum combination of standards across the dimensions for each result.

Table 2: Awarding exit results

Exit result	Minimum combination of standards
A	Standard A in any two dimensions and no less than a B in the remaining dimension
B	Standard B in any two dimensions and no less than a C in the remaining dimension
C	Standard C in any two dimensions and no less than a D in the remaining dimension
D	At least Standard D in any two dimensions and an E in the remaining dimension
E	Standard E in the three dimensions

Further guidance can be found in the QCE and QCIA policy and procedures handbook.

3.3.5 Standards matrix

	Standard A	Standard B	Standard C	Standard D	Standard E
Knowing and understanding	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:
	• thorough and clear description of concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood	• clear description of concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood	• description of concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood	• simple description of concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood	• superficial description of aspects of concepts and ideas related to fundamentals of early childhood
	• thorough and apt explanation of concepts and ideas of practices in early childhood learning.	• logical explanation of concepts and ideas of practices in early childhood learning.	• explanation of concepts and ideas of practices in early childhood learning.	• simple explanation of concepts and ideas of practices in early childhood learning.	• superficial explanation of aspects of concepts and ideas of practices in early childhood learning.
Analysing and applying	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:
	• thorough analysis of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• logical analysis of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• analysis of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• simple analysis of aspects of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• superficial analysis of obvious aspects of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals or practices of early childhood learning
	• considered and effective application of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• effective application of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• application of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• variable application of aspects of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning	• superficial application of obvious aspects of concepts and ideas of the fundamentals and practices of early childhood learning
	• considered and effective use of language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information for specific purposes.	• effective use of language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information for specific purposes.	• use of language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information for specific purposes.	• variable use of conventions and features to communicate ideas and information.	• fragmented use of conventions or features to communicate ideas and information.

Planning and evaluating	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:	The student work has the following characteristics:
	• considered and purposeful planning and thorough and detailed justification of play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs	• purposeful planning and detailed justification of play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs	• planning and justification of play-based learning activities responsive to children's needs	• simple planning and justification of play-based learning activities partially responsive to children's needs	• fragmented planning of play-based learning activities
	• thorough and informed evaluation of play-based learning activities in response to children's needs	• informed evaluation of play-based learning activities in response to children's needs	• evaluation of play-based learning activities in response to children's needs	• simple evaluation of play-based learning activities in response to children's needs	• statements of opinion about play-based learning activities
	• thorough and informed evaluation of contexts in early childhood learning.	• informed evaluation of contexts in early childhood learning.	• evaluation of contexts in early childhood learning.	• simple evaluation of contexts in early childhood learning.	• statements of opinion about contexts in early childhood learning.

4 Glossary

Term	Explanation
A	
apt	suitable to the purpose, fitting, appropriate
aspects of	the ways in which a thing may be regarded or viewed
C	
clear	easy to understand, fully intelligible, free from obscurity of sense
considered	thought about deliberately with a purpose
context	the conditions and circumstances that are relevant to a situation, setting or scenarios that occur in early childhood learning. Examples include: programs for children with diverse learning needs, effectiveness of education and care services, safety issues in early childhood learning and career pathways and post-school options
D	
detailed	executed with great attention to detail
E	
early childhood educators	are early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings (Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF))
early childhood learning	learning for children, aged from birth to five years, in early childhood education and care settings
early childhood professional	include any person who works with children between the ages of birth and eight years. It includes, but is not limited to, maternal and child health nurses, all early childhood practitioners who work directly with children in early childhood settings (educators), school teachers, family support workers, preschool field officers, inclusion support facilitators, student support service officers, primary school nurses, primary welfare officers, early childhood intervention workers, play therapists, health professionals and teachers working in hospitals, and education officers in cultural organisations[7] (VEYLDF)
early childhood settings	long daycare, occasional care, family daycare, Multi-Purpose Aboriginal Children's Services, preschools and kindergartens, playgroups, crèches, early intervention settings and similar services[8]
education and care services	any service providing or intending to provide education and care on a regular basis to children under 13 years of age other than services specifically excluded by national law or national regulations
effective	meeting the assigned purpose

[7] Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2011) *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework for all children from birth to eight years*. Melbourne.

[8] Council of Australian Governments. (2009). *Belonging, being & becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. Canberra: DEEWR.

Term	Explanation
F	
fragmented	reduced to fragments, disorganised, broken down
I	
informed	having relevant knowledge, being conversant with the topic
L	
language conventions	accepted language practices developed over time and generally used and understood, for example use of punctuation. An accepted practice that has developed over time and is generally used and understood, for example, the use of specific structural aspects of texts such as in report writing with sections for introduction, background, discussion and recommendations
language features	features of language that support meaning, e.g. sentence structure, noun group/phrase, vocabulary, punctuation, figurative language, framing, camera angles choices in language features and text structures together define a type of text and shape its meaning; these choices vary according to the purpose of a text, its subject matter, audience, and mode or medium of production
logical	rational and valid, internally consistent
M	
module of work	a module of work provides effective teaching strategies and learning experiences that facilitate students' demonstration of the dimensions and objectives as described in the syllabus A module of work: • draws from relevant aspects of the underpinning factors • identifies relevant concepts and ideas, and associated subject matter from the core topics • provides an alignment between core subject matter, learning experiences and assessment.
N	
National Quality Framework	The National Quality Framework (NQF)[9] is the result of an agreement between all Australian governments to work together to provide better educational and developmental outcomes for children using education and care services
O	
obvious	plain and evident; perfectly clear
P	
partial	attempted, with evidence provided, but incomplete
play-based learning activity	involves children actively engaged with and being involved in; is any open ended activity that values and develops children's curiosity, interests, skills, abilities, culture and knowledge in order to extend their learning
purposeful	having an intended or desired result

[9] Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (2012) *National Quality Framework*.

Term	Explanation
S	
service learning	a method of teaching that combines formal instruction with a related service in the community It integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and encourage lifelong civic engagement. Students learn and develop through active participation in organised service that is coordinated with a school and conducted in, and meets the needs of, a community
simple	easy to understand and deal with; may concern a single or basic aspect, few steps, obvious data/outcomes, limited or no relationships
statement of opinion	a sentence or assertion from a personal perspective
superficial	apparent and sometimes trivial
T	
thorough	carried out through or applied to the whole of something
U	
unit	a unit is 55 hours of timetabled school time, including assessment. A course of study will usually be completed over four units (220 hours).
V	
variable	changeable, fluctuating, uncertain

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