

# COURSE HANDBOOK

## GRADUATE DIPLOMA OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### OVERVIEW

Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education		
The Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education equips graduates with a fully accredited professional qualification accredited by ACECQA. It accredits you to work in Early Childhood Centres with children from 0 to 5 years old.	Director of Studies	Cassandra Pendlebury
	Program Convenor	Dr Debra Williams
	AQF Level	AQF Level 8 (Postgraduate)
	Qualification	Post Graduate Diploma
	Subjects	8
	IELTS	6.5
	Languages of Instruction	English
	CRICOS	117388C
	ASCED Code	070101
	Accreditation	Self-accreditation Professional accreditation (ACECQA)
Course Length	1 years full-time; up to 4 years part-time	

This Diploma is a one-year full-time qualification for a career in early childhood education and care services, long day care centres, and preschools. Admission into the course is via an undergraduate degree in any discipline, including a teaching qualification.

The course incorporates 60 days of professional experience in early childhood education settings and covers key areas of child development, education and curriculum studies, family and community contexts, history, and philosophy of early childhood, and ethical leadership and management. The program incorporates evidence-based theory and innovative practice to equip you with the necessary critical and pedagogical strategies in your work in early childhood contexts. It provides opportunity for students to explore these through a Christian worldview and to embed biblical principles and perspectives in their teaching practice. It equips students with the knowledge and skills required to competently address contemporary education and societal challenges.

The course builds on Alphacrucis University College's established expertise in producing graduates with purpose who embody integrity, professional knowledge and who make a positive contribution to society. This award is accredited by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

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### AC GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

#### **Christian Worldview**

A knowledge of the Christian story, derived from the Scriptures and tradition of the church. An awareness of the implications of this story for self-identity in the context of local and global communities. This includes a commitment to engage with alternate worldviews, showing appreciation of the values and perspectives of others.

#### **Leadership**

The ability to provide effective Christian leadership to individuals, groups and organisations, demonstrated in the capacity to influence and enable others to accomplish worthwhile objectives which contribute to the human good and the kingdom of God. This includes seeking to emulate the example of Jesus Christ in serving and empowering others.

#### **Integrity and Justice**

The ability to apply a Christian worldview in the diverse situations and responsibilities of life, and to exercise faith, hope, love and generosity as prevailing attitudes. This includes the active promotion of the gospel, social justice, equality, mutual respect and an ecological ethos.

#### **Communications**

The ability to communicate effectively to a range of audiences, in appropriate contexts using high levels of verbal, written and technological skills. This includes visual and media literacy, numeracy, rhetoric and persuasion.

#### **Personal and Social Skills**

Demonstrate relational skills that incorporate the flexibility for both independent and collaborative situations. This includes personal and group organizational skills, conflict management and resolution, as well as the ability to value and respect the opinions of others.

#### **Critical and Creative Thinking**

A capacity for critical and reflective thinking that is explored not only individually but within a community context. This includes a capacity to be creative and to research, analyse and resolve problems in innovative and prophetic ways.

#### **Professional Knowledge**

Maintenance and use of knowledge about a discipline or field, involving theoretical, conceptual and methodological elements. This includes striving continually and independently to secure further knowledge and where appropriate, defined professional skills.

### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 8	AC Course Learning Outcomes	AC Graduate Attributes
<b>Knowledge</b>	Graduates at this level will have advanced theoretical and technical knowledge in one or more disciplines or areas of practice.	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of inclusivity in practice that is informed by the connection between educational theories and research connected to teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Synthesise educational research principles and methods to critically evaluate application of educational programs and policies.</li> <li>• Integrate an understanding of pedagogically sound learning experiences consistent with a Christian worldview and appropriate to the demands of the Early Childhood teaching context in of planning, implementation, assessment and reporting</li> </ul>	<p>Christian Worldview</p> <p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <p>Professional Knowledge</p>
<b>Skills</b>	<p>Graduates at this level will have advanced cognitive, technical and communication skills to select and apply methods and technologies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse critically, evaluate and transform information to complete a range of activities</li> <li>• analyse, generate and transmit solutions to complex problems</li> <li>• transmit knowledge, skills and ideas to others</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrated ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically reflect on, and apply, effective pedagogical assessment approaches that enable ‘belonging, being and becoming’ of infants, toddlers, and young children.</li> <li>• Evaluate, synthesise and critically reflect and engage with theoretical knowledge regarding the stages of development in physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and spiritual growth in children with diverse profiles and apply strategies for progression.</li> <li>• Implement evidence-based practice and generate new evidence to improve teaching and learning practice.</li> <li>• Communicate effectively complex ideas and proposed solutions to peers and general audiences in diverse contexts.</li> <li>• Critically evaluate research issues and principles connected with professional decision-making as an early childhood professional/leader in educational settings.</li> <li>• Communicate effective ethical, reflective, and informed early childhood professional practice when working with colleagues, communities, children and their families, and other stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<p>Christian Worldview Leadership</p> <p>Integrity and Justice</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Personal and Social Skills</p> <p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <p>Professional Knowledge</p>

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### COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Specification	AQF Level 8	AC Learning Outcomes	AC Graduate Attributes
<b>Application of knowledge and skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduates at this level will apply knowledge and skills to demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement and adaptability and responsibility as a practitioner or learner.</li> </ul>	<p>Demonstrated ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Articulate new questions and apply the knowledge and skills developed within the Early Childhood context.</li> <li>Comply with professional codes of ethics and regulations which impact on the ability to work with children and keep abreast of changes in the legislation and practice applicable to the specific teaching context.</li> <li>Work independently, responsibly and with the level of professionalism expected of practitioner within the Early Childhood context.</li> <li>Implement evidence-based practice and critical reflection to improve teaching and learning practice.</li> </ul>	<p>Christian Worldview</p> <p>Leadership</p> <p>Integrity and Justice</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Personal and Social Skills</p> <p>Critical and Creative Thinking</p> <p>Professional Knowledge</p>

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### COURSE STRUCTURE

This course structure applies to students who commence from Semester 1, 2025		
<b>Structure of the course of study</b>	<p>The course structure is based on two semesters (each of 13 weeks duration).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60 credit points of core</li> <li>20 credit points of professional experience</li> </ul> <p>To qualify for the award of Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood a candidate shall accrue an aggregate of at least 80 credit points, including satisfactory completion of the core subjects noted below.</p> <p>ACECQA requirements specify 60 days supervised professional experience for post graduate teaching qualifications. This must include a minimum of 10 days in Australian Early Childhood settings with children under three years old (birth -35 months), and a minimum of 20 days in Australian Early Childhood settings with children aged three until they start formal schooling, including days with children under five years of age. The remaining balance will be undertaken with children birth-five years in Australian Early Childhood settings.</p>	
Content of the course of study		Credit points
Core subjects	EDU430 Early Childhood Perspectives Past and Present	10
	EDU431 Early Childhood Praxis and Pedagogy	10
	EDU433 Curriculum Studies in Early Childhood	10
	EDU432 Early Childhood Development, Wellbeing, and Inclusivity	10
	EDU434 Building Partnerships with Families and Communities	10
	EDU435 Early Childhood Leadership, Management and Research	10
Professional Experience	EXP431 Professional Experience 1 (10-days 0-3 and 20-days 3 to 5)	10
	EXP432 Professional Experience 2 (30 days 0 to 5)	10
Rules of progression	EDU431 and EDU433 must be completed concurrently or prior to EXP431. EDU431, EDU433 and EXP431 are prerequisites for EXP432	
Other protocols of the course	Must have the appropriate approvals for working with children at enrolment and before they may enter a classroom (equivalent working with children check, etc.).	
Pre-requisites for specific subjects	Pre-requisites are noted on the subject outline. Students must have completed the pre-requisite to enrol in the subject.	

Sequence of study					
Semester 1			Semester 2		
EDU430	Early Childhood Perspectives Past and Present	10	EDU432	Early Childhood Development, Wellbeing, and Inclusivity	10

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EDU431	Early Childhood Praxis and Pedagogy	10	EDU434	Building Partnerships with Families and Communities	10
EDU433	Curriculum Studies in Early Childhood	10	EDU435	Early Childhood Leadership, Management and Research	10
EXP431	Professional Experience 1 (10-days 0-3 and 20-days 3 to 5 in Early Childhood and Care Centre)	10	EXP432	Professional Experience 2 (30 days - 0 to 5 in Early Childhood and Care Centre)	10

For information on the teaching faculty for this course, please visit our [website](#).

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### Pathways

Students who have successfully completed this course and wish to register as teachers with their state teaching authority can complete additional workplace and professional requirements to obtain this status. This course can also provide a pathway into a related Master Degree.

### Career Opportunities

Graduates of the Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education may find employment in Early Childhood Centres.

### Work-Integrated Learning

Work-Integrated Learning will be undertaken through Professional Experience Placements. These subjects seek to create a direct linkage between the learning, skills and values engaged in lectures, and the reflection which occurs when these are applied in real-life settings. These work-based training subjects comprise of instruction, academic assessment and a placement in a workplace for each subject. Organisation and placement will be conducted by the AC Professional Experience Coordinator. Please note that AC professional experience team will try to arrange a professional experience close to where you live but that this may not always be possible and students may need to travel to their professional experience site. Students can also organise their own placement this, however, needs to be approved by the AC professional experience team and the conditions of the placement need to meet the course and tertiary requirements.

1. EXP431 Professional Experience 1 (10-days 0-3 and 20-days 3 to 5 in Early Childhood and Care Centre)
2. EXP432 Professional Experience 2 (30 days - 0 to 5 in Early Childhood and Care Centre)

*For further information related to Work-Integrated Learning please see the [Early Childhood Professional Experience Handbook](#) or contact our [Professional Experience](mailto:Education.PEX@ac.edu.au) team Education.PEX@ac.edu.au*

### ADMISSION CRITERIA

#### Academic Entry Requirements

<b>Course of study:</b>	GRADUATE DIPLOMA OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION		
<b>Delivery site:</b>	Sydney campus and online		
Student cohort	English language equivalence requirements	Educational and other qualifications, skills, prerequisite occupation(s)	Special or alternative admission arrangements <i>(for example, bridging courses)</i>
School leavers	None	Students need to have completed an AQF 7 or equivalent award.	N/A
Graduate of a VET qualification	None	Students need to have completed an AQF 7 or equivalent award.	Portfolio of Evidence to be presented at application.
Graduate of a higher education degree	None	Students need to have completed an AQF 7 or equivalent award.	N/A
Work and Life Experience	None	Students need to have completed an AQF 7 or equivalent award.	N/A
Overseas students	IELTS of 6.5 with no less than 6 in any band.	Students need to have completed an AQF 7 or equivalent award.	N/A

For further information about AC's provisional entry criteria, please see:

- [AC's Admissions Requirements](#)
- [Higher Education Provisional Entry Policy](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)



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### English Language Proficiency

If English is not the applicant's first language or if their first degree was awarded in a non-English speaking nation, they will be required to show proficiency in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (or equivalent). Such students admitted into our programs must attain an overall IELTS (or equivalent) score of 6.5 (with no score below 6 in any of the four skills areas, and a score of no less than 6 in speaking and listening), either on entry to or on graduation from the program.

*Applicants are encouraged to contact the [International Student Office](#) if they are unsure of the equivalence of their English language proficiency test scores.*

### Essential Requirements

**Child Protection Check:** NSW students are required to complete the Working with Children Check online. Students are classified a 'volunteer' in Education. Students who will undertake their professional experience in other states need to complete the equivalent check. This should be completed prior to course enrolment.

**Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Checks:** This is a requirement for students to complete their professional experience in an Australian Early Childcare Centre. This should be completed prior to course enrolment and must have been issued within the past 3 months.

**Anaphylaxis e-Training:** Training is provided free online by the Australian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) <http://etraining.allergy.org.au/> On completion of the online module participants receive a certificate of completion which must be included with your application. The training is required to be successfully undertaken every two years. This is the only training for anaphylaxis management in schools that New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) will accept. Students are required to complete this prior to their Professional Experience unit enrolment.

**NSW Department of Education Child Protection Awareness Training:** All students are required to complete the NSW Department of Education Child Protection Awareness Training (or the training required by their state) before enrolling in a Professional Experience unit. Students who have met the academic and essential entry requirements can progress into the course prior to completing this training.

### Pre-Admissions Interview

Students are required to submit a video-based pre-admission interview. A follow up live interview may be requested by the Program Director if necessary.

### Special Admissions Pathways

AC's [Admissions Policy](#) details the special admission pathways for our courses of study. The Special Admission Pathways are evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director. A student's admission requirements may be reconsidered on educational disadvantage grounds. *For a full list of educational disadvantage grounds, please see AC's [Admissions Policy](#).*

### ACCESS AND EQUITY

AC is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from discrimination on the basis of income, age, disability, social and ethnic background, location or gender. AC endeavours to increase opportunities for people of all backgrounds to participate in training programs, and implement programs that take into account the specific needs of participants. AC encourages students to inform AC of any disability, medical condition or learning need that may impact on their studies to arrange a study plan that best suits their needs.

### HOW TO APPLY

Once you have chosen your course of study, you will need to apply direct to AC. Applications typically close 3 weeks before semester commences.

All AC application forms are completed online. There are different forms depending on the level of study you are applying for and the location of your course.

*Further information on How to Apply and access to AC's Application Forms is available on our [website](#).*

#### Credit transfers and recognised prior learning (RPL)

You may be entitled to credit for prior learning, whether formal or informal. Formal learning can include previous study in higher education, vocational education, or adult and community education. Informal learning can include on the job learning or various kinds of work and life experience. Credit can reduce the amount of study needed to complete a degree.

*For further information about credit and recognition of prior learning please see AC's [Credit Transfer and Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#) or contact our [Student Support](#) team.*

### HOW TO ENROL

Once you have returned a signed copy of your Letter of Offer to accept your place at AC, you will be invited to enrol in your specific subjects in the next academic period. Students are required to consult their timetable (can be found [here](#)), and contact the Program Director for tailored academic advice before completing the enrolment form.

Any credit transfers or recognition of prior learning will also be applied at this time.

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### STUDENT SERVICES

#### Student Support Team

AC's Student Support Team exists to ensure you get from Orientation Day to Graduation Day with a smile on your face!

#### Academic Support

- Tailored academic guidance
- Assessment variation to accommodate disabilities, medical conditions and/or learning needs
- Exam reader/writers
- One-on-one tutoring and small group workshops for face-to-face and distances students
- Physical libraries
- Access to online journal databases
- Access to eBook resources
- Resources are also provided online for self-development

#### Non-Academic Support

- Pastoral Care
- Chaplains
- Professional counselling
- Careers guidance
- On-campus childcare\*
- Extra-curricular and community services
- SRC – The Student Representative Council
- Recreation areas

#### Student Life

All students can take part in:

- mission trips and community service projects
- weekly chapel services
- lunches and gatherings on campus
- opportunities to hear or present research
- masterclasses to take your skills and knowledge to the next level
- social events both on and away from campus
- exchange programs with other colleges and universities around the world

...and much, much more! To find out what is happening near you or to get specific details just contact the Student Support Team:

Email: [studentsupport@ac.edu.au](mailto:studentsupport@ac.edu.au)

Phone: (02) 8893 9005

<https://www.ac.edu.au/current-students/student-support/>

*\*Not available at all campuses*

### WHERE TO GET FURTHER INFORMATION

#### [ac.edu.au](http://ac.edu.au)

AC's [website](http://ac.edu.au) is the best place to discover what's happening at AC and explore our courses, campuses and support services. If you are not yet an AC student, our [Future Students](#) team are here to help find the right course for you!

#### Moodle

Once you begin your studies at AC, you will use [Moodle](#) as your Learning Management System (LMS) to access all your subject content, the AC Academic Handbook, Study Skills and Textbook Information. New Students can also use Moodle to view our Induction Videos.

#### International Students

Nothing beats the experience of being part of our community and participating in our classroom discussions! Alternatively, for students who decide to study from their home country, AC brings education to you by offering many subjects and degrees by distance education allowing you to study from anywhere in the world. Flexible delivery means that you will have access to our e-Learning platform which provides resources, podcasts, online forums and tutor assistance that allows you to complete your studies from your home country. International students desiring to register as teachers in Australia are required to do fifty percent of their professional experience in Australia including their final professional experience placement.

Further information about International Students, including the application process, international recognition of AC courses of study and FAQ's, is available on our [website](#).

Alternatively, our [Future Students](#) team are available to answer any questions you may have about your requirements as an onshore or offshore International Students at AC.

#### QILT

Thinking about higher education institutions and study areas? Wish you could ask someone about their experience? The [QILT website](#) helps you compare official study experience and employment outcomes data from Australian higher education institutions.

#### TEQSA National Register

The purpose of the [TEQSA National Register](#) is to be the authoritative source of information on the status of registered higher education providers in Australia.

#### Complaints and Grievances

If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of your application, AC's [Complaint and Grievance Resolution Policy](#) outlines the procedure for resolving a complaint or grievance.