

## Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care (GDCH) - GDCH

	External
<b>Start:</b>	Semester 1 (February) Semester 2 (July) Semester 3 (November)
<b>Fees:</b>	Commonwealth supported place Domestic full fee paying place
<b>Standard duration:</b>	1 year full-time, up to 4 years part-time

### Notes:

In 2023 the program follows the Semester calendar. The [Academic Calendar and Important Dates](#) webpage will allow you to view and download a copy of the important dates for the Semester calendar.

This program is offered from Semester 1, 2022.

Programs at UniSQ regularly undergo a comprehensive re-accreditation process to assure their relevance and quality. This program occurs in a suite of five Early Childhood programs which are accredited with the [Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority \(ACECQA\)](#). The suite of five Early Childhood programs which are accredited with ACECQA consist of the ; [Master of Learning and Teaching \(Early Years\)](#), the ; [Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care](#), the ; [Graduate Certificate of Early Childhood Education and Care](#), the ; [Bachelor of Education \(Early Childhood\)](#) and the ; [Bachelor of Early Childhood](#).

This program qualifies graduates as an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) to teach children from birth to five years old. These prior-to-school settings are known differently throughout Australia, such as early learning centres, preschools, long day care and kindergarten. This program does not qualify graduates to teach in primary school settings. This nested program includes eight courses, which are drawn from other UniSQ Early Childhood Education programs and qualifies graduates as an ECT.

### Contact us

Future Australian and New Zealand students	Current students
<a href="#">Ask a question</a> Freecall (within Australia): 1800 269 500 Phone (from outside Australia): +61 7 4631 5315 Email: <a href="mailto:study@usq.edu.au">study@usq.edu.au</a>	<a href="#">Ask a question</a> Freecall (within Australia): 1800 007 252 Phone (from outside Australia): +61 7 4631 2285 Email: <a href="mailto:usq.support@usq.edu.au">usq.support@usq.edu.au</a>

### Professional accreditation

This program is an approved early childhood teacher qualification with the [Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority \(ACECQA\)](#) .

### Program aims

The GDCH is offered to enable the completion of three semesters of study in one year, which includes 60 days of professional experience. The program prepares the beginning ECT for employment to work with learners from birth to five years of age. This accredited early childhood education program is designed for graduates with an undergraduate degree in any discipline, including a three-year education qualification. Following completion of this program, graduates will be equipped to work as a qualified ECT in early learning centres, preschools, long day care, kindergartens or as an educator within a family day care or traditional day care setting.

### Program objectives

The program objectives align with the requirements of ACECQA. On successful completion of the program, graduates will be able to demonstrate that they:

- know and understand the characteristics of babies and young children and how they develop and learn
- know and understand the regulations and learning frameworks that govern diverse early childhood settings

- can collaborate with others to plan for the effective implementation of age appropriate programs for child engagement, development and learning
- can create and maintain supportive, socially inclusive and safe learning environments within diverse settings
- can observe, interpret, assess, provide feedback and report on child development and learning
- can engage in professional learning to develop and improve practice
- can engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers, stakeholders and the community

## Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) is a single national, comprehensive system of qualifications offered by higher education institutions (including universities), vocational education and training institutions and secondary schools. Each AQF qualification has a set of descriptors which define the type and complexity of knowledge, skills and application of knowledge and skills that a graduate who has been awarded that qualification has attained, and the typical volume of learning associated with that qualification type.

This program is at AQF Qualification Level 08. Graduates at this level will have advanced knowledge and skills for professional or highly skilled work and/or further learning.

The full set of levels criteria and qualification type descriptors can be found by visiting [www.aqf.edu.au](http://www.aqf.edu.au).

## Admission requirements

To be eligible for admission, applicants must satisfy the following requirements:

### Academic entry criteria

- Completion of an undergraduate degree or equivalent in any discipline, including a three year education degree, from a recognised tertiary institution  
Or
- A relevant diploma and a minimum of five years of documented, relevant work experience in a leadership position in an early childhood setting (e.g. Activity Group Leader, Head Teacher, Centre Director, Educational Leader, Group Leader)  
And
- English language requirements apply to applicants whose previous undergraduate study was completed in a country other than Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Republic of Ireland, United Kingdom or the United States of America or undertaken in a language other than English. Applicants from a non-English speaking background must attain an IELTS score of at least 6.5 with a minimum of 6.5 in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

### Non-academic entry criteria

- Students must be available for a prescribed period of time to undertake the majority of the supervised Professional Experience placements in an Australian Early Childhood setting, or at another approved site as required by the program. Some childcare centres may require evidence of vaccination prior to undertaking professional experience at the site. State law in Queensland (Australia) requires that all adults working/undertaking professional experience/researching with children under the age of 18, are required to possess a current Positive Exemption Card (Blue Card or Exemption Card). Students in other Australian states or in overseas contexts need to ensure they have complied with the equivalent requirements and have registered the details with the UniSQ Education Placement Office.

All students are required to satisfy the applicable [English language requirements](#).

If students do not meet the English language requirements they may apply to study a University-approved [English language program](#). On successful completion of the English language program, students may be admitted to an award program.

## Program fees

### Commonwealth supported place

A Commonwealth supported place is where the Australian Government makes a contribution towards the cost of a students' higher education and students pay a [student contribution amount](#), which varies depending on the courses undertaken. Students are able to calculate the fees for a particular course via the [Course Fee Schedules](#).

Commonwealth Supported students may be eligible to defer their fees through a Government loan called [HECS-HELP](#).

### Domestic full fee paying place

Domestic full fee paying places are funded entirely through the full fees paid by the student. Full fees vary depending on the courses that are taken. Students are able to calculate the fees for a particular course via the [Course Fee Schedule](#)

Domestic full fee paying students may be eligible to defer their fees through a Government loan called [FEE-HELP](#) provided they meet the residency and citizenship requirements.

Australian citizens, Permanent Humanitarian Visa holders, Permanent Resident visa holders and New Zealand citizens who will be resident outside Australia for the duration of their program pay full tuition fees and are not eligible for [FEE-Help](#).

## Program structure

This online and external program is comprised of eight courses which can be completed in one year with enrolment in three consecutive semesters (refer to the Recommended Enrolment Patterns for either Semester 1, Semester 2 or Semester 3 entry). The program structure consists of five courses that are specific for early childhood education and three courses which have embedded and assessed professional experience to cover the age range in prior-to-school settings. The required 60 days of professional experience includes 10 days with children under three years of age (birth-35 months) and at least 20 days with children aged three until before they start formal schooling, including days with children under five years of age. Students intending to complete the program in 1 year with three consecutive semesters of study are advised to follow the recommended enrolment pattern with a Professional Experience placement every semester.

## Program completion requirements

To graduate from this program, students must complete all eight units which includes 60 days supervised Professional Experience.

## Required time limits

This program is able to be completed by students in 1 year by studying eight courses and enrolling in three consecutive semesters. Students can enrol in a maximum of three courses per semester due to the time constraints which are required to attend professional experience placements. Students have a maximum of 4 years to complete this program.

## Core courses

Course	Semester of offer External/Online
<a href="#">EDM5007 Cultivating Supportive Learning Environments</a>	1, 2
<a href="#">EDM5010 Literacy Learning in the Early Years</a> <sup>£</sup>	1, 3
<a href="#">EDM5014 Planning for Learning: Curriculum, Play and Pedagogy</a>	1, 2
<a href="#">EDM5016 Early Years Data and Assessment</a>	2

<a href="#">EDM8017 Relating and Inquiring in Infant and Toddler Education and Care Contexts<sup>£</sup></a>	1, 3
<a href="#">EDM8018 Leading in Early Childhood<sup>£</sup></a>	2, 3
<a href="#">EDM8020 Arts and Technology through Play<sup>£</sup></a>	2, 3
<a href="#">EDU4160 Numeracy, Literacy and STEM in Early Childhood<sup>£</sup></a>	3

#### Footnotes

£ In Semester 3, 2023 this course will be delivered as a Transition (9 week) semester, commencing on 13 November 2023 and concluding on 12 January 2024

## Major studies

The program consists of courses that specialise in the development, care and education of children from birth to five years, including the transition to school. The program is inclusive of early childhood education and curriculum studies, teaching pedagogies and professional experience. The historical and comparative perspectives of early childhood are interwoven with contemporary theories and practices for developing family and community partnerships.

## Professional experience

Professional Experience is a mandated component of this program which is an embedded and assessed requirement in three courses for a total of 60 days. The major areas of study include the principles and practices of early childhood education and care, key issues in the early childhood education and care which includes working with families and applying knowledge, skills and capabilities in professional experience. [EDM5014 Planning for Learning: Curriculum, Play and Pedagogy](#) includes 20 days professional experience with children aged 3 – 5 years that is supervised by a registered teacher. In [EDM8017 Relating and Inquiring in Infant and Toddler Education and Care Contexts<sup>£</sup>](#), students will gain an extensive understanding of the early years through 10 days supervised placement with children in a birth to 35 months context. The program requires 30 days of placement with children before they start formal schooling or another approved context in [EDU4160 Numeracy, Literacy and STEM in Early Childhood](#).

Students intending to complete the program in 1 year are advised on the importance of attending a Professional Experience placement every semester by meeting pre-requisites, complying with placement requirements, communicating with the [UniSQ Education Placement Office](#) and by taking sufficient personal and professional responsibility to attend sites as required throughout the program.

The placements in early childhood contexts or other approved settings are organised by the UniSQ Education Placement Office and the calendar of placement dates are scheduled in advance. At UniSQ, Professional Experience placements are managed through the [InPlace](#) online software management system. The expectation is that students will usually attend block placements which are embedded throughout their program unless alternative arrangements are approved by UniSQ.

The majority of the supervised placements must be attended in an Australian school setting. Students must be available for a prescribed period of time to undertake a placement in a school or other approved site as required in the program. State law in Queensland (Australia) requires that all adults working/undertaking professional experience/researching with children under the age of 18, are required to possess a current Positive Exemption Card ([Blue Card or Exemption Card](#)) on enrolment. Students must hold a current valid Blue Card throughout the duration of each Professional Experience. The University is legally obliged to warn students that it is an offence for a disqualified person to submit a Blue Card application. Students in other Australian states or in overseas contexts need to ensure that they have complied with the equivalent requirements and have registered the details with the UniSQ Education Placement Office. Students should keep their Blue Card on them at all times while attending a Professional Experience placement.

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## IT requirements

This program is studied through online courses and external placement courses for Professional Experience. For information regarding technology requirements, please refer to the [UniSQ minimum computing standards](#).

## Other program requirements

Students must maintain good standing in this program. Please refer to the [Academic Standing, Progression and Exclusion Procedure](#).

Students must also hold a valid [Blue Card](#) within Queensland or hold a valid [Working with Children Check](#) as well as having completed any further training/certificates relevant to the state in which they are completing their [Professional Experience](#).

There is no fee for a student Blue Card, but the program has additional costs associated with Professional Experience. Every effort is made to place students within a reasonable distance of their home; however students are also encouraged to consider a rural, regional or remote placement. There may be costs associated with travel, accommodation, meal expenses, incidentals and the possible loss of income from other paid employment.

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All students are expected to commit themselves to the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour as defined in the [Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics](#).

## Articulation

There is no articulation pathway into the [MELT Master of Learning and Teaching \(Early Years\)](#) due to the specific entry requirements for the program. On successful completion of this program, graduates may progress to a range of other coursework programs but they are not eligible for registration as a teacher in schools.

## Related programs

The suite of five Early Childhood programs which are accredited with ACECQA consist of the [MELT Master of Learning and Teaching \(Early Years\)](#), the [GDCH Graduate Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care](#), the [GCCCH Graduate Certificate of Early Childhood Education and Care](#), the [BEED Bachelor of Education \(Early Childhood\)](#) and the [BECH Bachelor of Early Childhood](#).

## Exit points

A student who chooses not to complete or who does not maintain good standing in this program will be permitted to exit with a lesser qualification as set out below, provided that they have met the requirements of that program. This means:

- a student who successfully completes four postgraduate courses may apply to exit with the [Graduate Certificate of Education](#) as an alternative education qualification. However, this qualification is not approved for teacher registration and it does not meet the requirements of the ACECQA framework.

## Credit

Candidates eligible for admission into this program may be eligible for up to four units of credit on the basis of successful completion of relevant, equivalent postgraduate level study completed at a recognised university or institution.

Credit approved in this program will not automatically apply to other specialisations or UniSQ programs. Claims for credit should be submitted prior to or at the time of enrolment. Each claim will be assessed on individual merit in line with the [Credit and Exemptions Procedure](#).

For instructions on applying for credit, please visit our [website](#).

## Recommended enrolment pattern - Semester 1 entry

For a student to be eligible to graduate in 1 year, they must successfully complete these set courses in this strict pattern:

Course	Year of program and semester in which course is normally studied						Enrolment requirements	Comments
	On-campus (ONC)		External (EXT)		Online (ONL)			
	Year	Sem	Year	Sem	Year	Sem		
EDM5010 Literacy Learning in the Early Years <sup>£</sup>					1	1	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT or MPLT	
EDM8017 Relating and Inquiring in Infant and Toddler Education and Care Contexts <sup>£</sup>			1	1			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	10 days Professional Experience with children under 3 years of age
EDM5007 Cultivating Supportive Learning Environments					1	2	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT or MPLT or MSLT Enrolment is not permitted in EDM5007 if EDC2100 or ESB2100 has been previously completed	
EDM5016 Early Years Data and Assessment					1	2	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT	
EDM5014 Planning for Learning: Curriculum, Play and Pedagogy			1	2			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	20 days Professional Experience with children aged 3 -5 years (Kindergarten)
EDM8018 Leading in Early Childhood <sup>£</sup>					1	3	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	
EDM8020 Arts and Technology through Play <sup>£</sup>					1	3	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT	
EDU4160 Numeracy, Literacy and STEM in Early Childhood <sup>£</sup>			1	3			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH	30 days Professional Experience with children under 5 years of age or as approved by UniSQ

### Footnotes

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## Recommended enrolment pattern - Semester 2 entry

For a student to be eligible to graduate in 1 year, they must successfully complete these set courses in this strict pattern:

Course	Year of program and semester in which course is normally studied						Enrolment requirements	Comments
	On-campus (ONC)		External (EXT)		Online (ONL)			
	Year	Sem	Year	Sem	Year	Sem		
EDM5007 Cultivating Supportive Learning Environments					1	2	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT or MPLT or MSLT Enrolment is not permitted in EDM5007 if EDC2100 or ESB2100 has been previously completed	
EDM5016 Early Years Data and Assessment					1	2	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT	
EDM5014 Planning for Learning: Curriculum, Play and Pedagogy			1	2			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	20 days Professional Experience with children aged 3 -5 years (Kindergarten)
EDM8018 Leading in Early Childhood <sup>£</sup>					1	3	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	
EDM8020 Arts and Technology through Play <sup>£</sup>					1	3	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT	
EDU4160 Numeracy, Literacy and STEM in Early Childhood <sup>£</sup>			1	3			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH	30 days Professional Experience with children under 5 years of age or as approved by UniSQ
EDM5010 Literacy Learning in the Early Years <sup>£</sup>					1	1	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT or MPLT	
EDM8017 Relating and Inquiring in Infant and Toddler Education and Care Contexts <sup>£</sup>			1	1			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	10 days Professional Experience with children under 3 years of age

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## Recommended enrolment pattern - Semester 3 entry

For a student to be eligible to graduate in 1 year, they must successfully complete these set courses in this strict pattern:

Course	Year of program and semester in which course is normally studied						Enrolment requirements	Comments
	On-campus (ONC)		External (EXT)		Online (ONL)			
	Year	Sem	Year	Sem	Year	Sem		
EDM8018 Leading in Early Childhood <sup>£</sup>					1	3	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	
EDM8020 Arts and Technology through Play <sup>£</sup>					1	3	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT	
EDU4160 Numeracy, Literacy and STEM in Early Childhood <sup>£</sup>			1	3			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH	30 days Professional Experience with children under 5 years of age or as approved by UniSQ
EDM5010 Literacy Learning in the Early Years <sup>£</sup>					1	1	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT or MPLT	
EDM8017 Relating and Inquiring in Infant and Toddler Education and Care Contexts <sup>£</sup>			1	1			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	10 days Professional Experience with children under 3 years of age
EDM5007 Cultivating Supportive Learning Environments					1	2	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT or MPLT or MSLT Enrolment is not permitted in EDM5007 if EDC2100 or ESB2100 has been previously completed	
EDM5016 Early Years Data and Assessment					1	2	Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GDCH or MELT	
EDM5014 Planning for Learning: Curriculum, Play and Pedagogy			1	2			Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in one of the following Programs: GCCH or GDCH or MELT	20 days Professional Experience with children aged 3 -5 years (Kindergarten)

### Footnotes

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