

Internship Program

Bachelor of Education Early Childhood Studies (Y42)



Creative
thinkers
made here.

2026

Contents

Welcome	3	Roles and Responsibilities	7
Rationale	4	• School Principle/Centre Director • School/Early Learning Centre Internship Coordinator	
Professional Colleague	4	• University Internship Coordinator • Professional Colleague Intern	
Developing Relationships	4	Assessments	8
Reflective Practice	4	Pebblepad and Canvas	8
ePortfolio	5	Attendance and Participation	8
Projects	5	Appendix A	9
Timeline	6	Reference List	10



Welcome

Thank you for your involvement in the early childhood Internship program for 2026. This booklet has been provided to try to give a clearer sense of the rationale and participant requirements during the Internship for Interns, schools and early learning centres.

This placement and associated online University work are equivalent to four units a student would normally undertake in second semester of the final year of their course. It contains some course work elements that are necessary for their registration and graduation as designated by both ACECQA and the TRBWA.



To gain a place in the Internship program students are required to have a high- grade point average and undertake an interview to be considered for the program. Students successfully complete their ATP at the same school or early learning centre before becoming an Intern in third term.

The Internship Program has a vastly different emphasis from the Assistant Teacher Program (ATP) professional experience placement. The Internship assists to develop a deeper level of understanding of the complexity of school culture and what it means to be a committed graduate teacher. This may look different across settings as schools and early learning centres may use an Intern in one classroom, across classrooms or to develop a specific project to implement. The Intern's relationship with staff will progress to that of a colleague engaged in professional learning.

There is a strong emphasis on independent learning, whilst supported by experienced staff from the school/early learning centre and University. It is expected that an Intern will be under the guidance of a Professional Colleague although other experienced staff may be involved in the mentoring as well. While Interns will still be involved in teaching (50%–60% teaching load), there is no longer an onus to assess the Intern on their teaching performance. Instead the school or early learning centre supports in the Intern's transition from University to the profession.

This may involve guiding their practice, sharing and discussing experiences in the context, and providing advice and participation in collegial discussions. Interns are also asked to be engaged in a project or activity in an area where the school or early learning centre feels there is a need for additional assistance. As an Intern, Pre-Service Teachers take the initiative (called leadership) to become part of the wider professional community to assist with, or analyse an existing activity or develop a new activity that would benefit the staff and/or children.

An advantage of this Internship Program is the reciprocal nature of the learning and construction of knowledge. The University will make provision for the Intern's learning modules to be available to school or early learning centre staff who may be interested in finding out more about leadership (see definition over the page), teamwork, the profession and developing an ePortfolio. The internship is seen as mutually beneficial to the school/ early learning centre Intern and University and will develop the strength and depth of the teaching profession.

As Internship Coordinator, I look forward to working in partnership with the school, or early learning centre, staff and Interns.

Mrs Bev Adkin

Internship Coordinator

Email: b.adkin@ecu.edu.au

Phone: 08 9370 6641

Rationale

It is suggested that Internships play an essential role toward teacher effectiveness with Interns building knowledge within the school environment and becoming embedded within the school culture (Goldhaber and Keesler, 2019). Under the supervision of experienced teachers' Interns can connect theory to practice during authentic learning experiences through nurturing, guidance and encouragement (Calamlam & Mokshein, 2019). The program is conducted in a manner to simulate a graduate's first year whilst still being guided and supported by the school, early learning centre and University. The Internship aims to create 'classroom ready' graduates (TEMAG, 2015, p. 67). It is important to acknowledge that Interns are still undergraduates training to become early childhood teachers.

The certification of the course by the TRBWA and ACECQA means that certain knowledge and skills that would normally be in second semester of fourth year are placed here. Leadership for the graduate stage of teaching is about leading your own professional and ethical practice (not leaving it to others to tell you what to do). It concerns initiating and implementing high quality practice for the best outcomes for children. Some graduate teachers may be in charge of the early years in their workplace, so skills around working in teams, effective communication, critical reflection and ethical practice are some topics investigated. We hope that professional colleagues will assist with collegial conversations about the content of the Intern's coursework. They are also invited to learn more and develop their own ePortfolio if they so wish.

Professional Colleague

The teaching staff, particularly those allocated to work closely with the Intern will be referred to as Professional Colleagues. A Professional Colleague will be designated for each Intern; this is someone with whom they can critically reflect during the Internship Program. The Professional Colleague can assist by formulating questions, exchanging ideas, collaborating and proposing new ideas and thinking through in a continuous feedback process. When Professional Colleagues are fully aware of Interns and can sense and be in tune to their behaviour, they are able to use available occasions to create opportunities for the co construction of learning and the practicing of new skills.

Effective mentoring is more than just passing knowledge on to Interns. Behaviours to affect change in Interns can include 'skill-steering moves, independence-inducing moves, confidence-building moves and authority establishing moves' (Calamlam & Mokshein, 2019, p. 30). Professional Colleagues empower Interns and assist them in a smoother transition into the profession.

Developing Relationships

Building relationships with a Professional Colleague is a crucial element in the Internship program. It is necessary for the Intern to be oriented to the policies and practices of the setting and to feel welcomed in the environment. Clear and honest communication is imperative and instigates trust in the school context.

After completing the ATP at the school/early learning centre, Interns build upon existing relationships and are inducted into a new position. Clear roles and responsibilities are required, and channels of communication need to be apparent. Interns develop relationships within the staff team but still need to know what to do in times of need and how to go about professionally communicating, collaborating and supporting one another.

Reflective Practice

During the Internship, reflective practice is pivotal to the growth and learning of the Interns. Through critical reflection, deeper learning can occur by constructing and deconstructing experiences, beliefs and attitudes (Calamlam & Mokshein, 2019). Engaging in reflective conversations is one effective tool to help Interns to learn from their experiences and deepen their understandings.

Interns will be expected to make regular reflective practice entries into their ePortfolio. Through a reflective framework, Interns will be making connection to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST).

ePortfolio

An ePortfolio is an evolving electronic/online resource that records, stores and archives the artefact's of learning and reflection for an individual (Hallam et al., 2008). The ePortfolio will be developed through Pebble Pad. The ePortfolio can be used to showcase work and experience for employment applications, professional registration and career advancement. Interns maintain a file as a repository of artefact's which can be added to including video/audio files, photos, documents, PDF, free text.

The ePortfolio can allow Interns to demonstrate learning through reflection, discussion and assessment activities and provision of evidence for summative assessment. It has been developed so they can showcase their work against the Australian Professional Teaching Standard (APTS). Interns retain access to their ePortfolio after leaving ECU and have the capacity to share with others to illustrate their work.

Projects

Interns are encouraged to be responsible for some small leadership project (graduate stage) that will benefit the school or early learning setting. The project, initiative or task is negotiated with the School/Early Learning Centre Internship Coordinator and University Internship Coordinator. Reflection on the development, implementation and evaluation of this experience will be recorded in the ePortfolio.



Timeline

Phase 1: Pre-ATP			
Time Period	Structure	Decription	Milestone
Term 1	Essential: Day one of school term or start of the year in early learning centre.	• Orientation to the start of the year. • Observation of practice. • Engagement with children's learning. • Support the learning program where appropriate.	
	ECU oncampus. 5 planning days for IPP4350.	Commencement of lectures and tutorials in preparation for ATP. ATP (IPP4350), QTPA and elective unit. Planning visits include collating contextual and programming information required for submission of on-campus tasks for ATP.	ATP Planning and Assessment.
Phase 2: ATP			
Time Period	Structure	Decription	Milestone
Term 2	Assistant Teacher program IPP4350 (8 weeks).	Assistant Teacher Program planning, teaching and assessment according to guidelines for the Professional Experience.	ATP Assessment.
Phase 3: Post ATP			
Time Period	Structure	Decription	Milestone
Term 3	Duration of Internship settings Term 3 (minimum of 8 weeks).	• Work with Professional Colleague in allocated classroom(s) and where appropriate across the early years setting (K-2). • One day a week to complete learning modules and complete tasks related to their assessment such as compiling evidence for the ePortfolio and leading tasks as part of a project. Some professional learning/seminar may be require on-campus attendance or visits to other schools/settings may also take place on this day. • All activities linked to APST and supported by ePortfolio. • The teaching component may include up to two days of relief teaching at the discretion of the host school or ELC.	Assessment: Professional reflective, journal entries, ePortfolio, evidence of leading tasks for a project.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Principal/Centre Director

Interns are under the administrative control of the Principal/Director and the direction of staff delegated by the Principal/Director. It is expected that Interns would spend some time with the Principal/Director discussing specific aspects of the Internship such as the role of the Intern, the Professional Colleagues, the Intern as part of the community and the leadership and management roles of a Principal/Director.

University Internship Coordinator

The role of the University Internship Coordinator is to liaise between the school/early learning centre, Intern and University. They oversee the learning modules and course content required in the Internship Program. The assessment of the Intern is shared with the school/early learning centre and the University Internship Coordinator. The school /early learning centre Internship Coordinator will primarily refer all communication regarding the program to the University Coordinator.

School/Early Learning Centre Internship Coordinator

This is a role delegated to an experienced member of staff. Responsibilities include:

- Orienting Interns to the school/early learning centre.
- Coordinating an induction process where the Intern is made aware of the appropriate policies and practices (including OH&S).
- Ensuring appropriate mentoring is in place appointing a Professional Colleague as the main mentor.
- Liaising with the University Internship Coordinator
- Performance management of Intern (workload allocation, professionalism).
- Monitor the relief teaching days to ensure they don't create a conflict with the commitment and requirements of Phase 3 – Internship program.
- Ensure the relief days (no more than two days per week) are prioritised to align with their Early Childhood qualification in years Kindergarten to Year 2 however if there is an urgent need to provide relief beyond this phase of schooling and the intern is prepared to teach this year level while being well supported by the school, we will also support this. Please contact the University Coordinator to discuss further if needed.

Professional Colleague

Each Intern will be assigned one Professional Colleague within the school/early learning centre context.

The relationship formed between the Intern and Professional Colleague is one of collegiality and support. Professional Colleagues play an important role in the professional development of the Intern and need to be committed to assisting Interns in their transition from the University to the profession.

Ideally it is best if the Intern and Professional Colleague partake in shared DOTT/planning time for reflective discussions and sharing of the coursework requirements. Professional Colleagues guide and consolidate practice, co-teach, share and discuss classroom experiences and the wider workings of a school/early learning centre setting.

Intern

The internship is a full-time commitment, four days in the setting and one day to complete learning modules and set tasks. Interns work under the guidance and supervision of the Principal/Director, School Internship Coordinator and Professional Colleague in accordance with the roles and responsibilities established for any other teacher at the school/early learning centre. The attitude of the Intern is paramount. The Internship, whilst it presents as an amazing opportunity, involves a lot of hard work and commitment on behalf of the Intern.

Specific expectations:

- Completion of all online activities as set out by the University (one day a week). This is the work designated to fulfill the course registration processes and the Intern's graduation requirements.
- Full time commitment which involves four days attendance in an internship setting and one day a week to complete learning modules at university or nominated setting. This one day may include on campus attendance or school/setting visits.
- Collaboration with other teachers and their professional roles and all aspects of the whole school community
- Learning experiences and unit planning for the teaching, co-teaching or team teaching (50-60% teaching load) which may include their project.
- Completion of a project or assistance to the setting to illustrate leadership and agency
- Additional roles may include the duties (under supervision) of a practicing teacher such as:
 - Playground duty / Sport supervision.
 - Attendance at school/early learning centre and staff meetings and professional development sessions.
 - Parent/teacher meetings.
 - Any other programs or events at the setting.

Assessment

Learning outcomes for EDU4500 Internship

On completion of this unit Interns should be able to:

- Describe the challenges faced at the commencement of a professional career.
- Identify personal strengths and weaknesses, through reflective practice, and develop strategies for professional development.
- Use technology to establish and maintain professional networks.
- Identify and evaluate the appropriateness of professional practices.
- Critically reflect on own performance in relation to relevant professional competencies and mandated teacher standards.

The assessment is discussed between the Professional Colleague, School/Early learning centre Internship Coordinator and University Internship Coordinator. Central to this is the three-way communication process between all parties but finalised by the University Internship Coordinator. Expectations between the three key stakeholders need to be carefully managed. Assessment is graded. The School Internship Coordinator (and/or Principal/ Director) will complete a written report / reference for the Intern based on their performance at the end of the program.

For consistent assessment across settings it is necessary to ensure expectations are similar as to the amount and quality of work across each school/early learning centre context.

Phase 1 & 2 Pre ATP and the ATP focus on the compliance and assessment involved with the ATP capstone unit. Phase 3, Post ATP, is focused on enrichment and transition into the early childhood profession. This is all about notions of a deeper experience. Phase 3 involves doing the equivalent of 4 units, 60 credit points.

- Evidence – Interns select the best examples that showcase their continuing development of the APST at the Graduate level. This will include key artefacts and reflections to do with teaching and learning, information from Learning Modules and opportunities to lead project tasks at the school.
- ePortfolio – Selected work recorded in a Reflective Professional Portfolio (ePortfolio).
- Become involved in a leadership opportunity (graduate stage) in some capacity within the setting. This could include developing a project at the class, cluster, year level, school/early learning centre and community level or a combination. It will involve reflection on the development and implementation of this experience.

Pebblepad and Canvas

The Internship is supported by PebblePad and Canvas learning environments as the key mode of providing content to the Interns and the Professional Colleagues with scaffolds provided to complete tasks.

Attendance and Participation

Interns attend for the whole of Term 3 and are expected to work at the school/early learning centre four days a week. One day is for Interns to complete learning modules, attend on-campus sessions when required, visit other Internship schools/early learning centre and complete tasks related to their assessments such as compiling evidence for the ePortfolio or leading tasks as part of a project or school program. An Intern is expected to take on a 50%-60% teaching load which may include their project.



Appendix A: Mapping to Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

Standard	Focus	Focus
Professional Knowledge 1. Know students and how they learn	1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students	✓
	1.2 Understand how students learn	✓
	1.3 Students with diverse linguistic, cultural, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds	✓
	1.4 Strategies for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students	✓
	1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities	✓
	1.6 Strategies to support full participation of students with disability	✓
2. Know the content and how to teach it	2.1 Content and teaching strategies of the teaching area	✓
	2.2 Content selection and organisation	✓
	2.3 Curriculum, assessment and reporting	✓
	2.4 Understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians	✓
	2.5 Literacy and numeracy strategies	✓
	2.6 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)	✓
Professional Practice 3. Plan for and implement effective teaching and learning	3.1 Establish challenging learning goals	✓
	3.2 Plan, structure and sequence learning programs	✓
	3.3 Use teaching strategies	✓
	3.4 Select and use resources	✓
	3.5 Use effective classroom communication	✓
	3.6 Evaluate and improve teaching programs	✓
	3.7 Engage parents/carers in the educative process	✓
4. Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments	4.1 Support student participation	✓
	4.2 Manage classroom activities	✓
	4.3 Manage challenging behaviour	✓
	4.4 Maintain student safety	✓
	4.5 Use ICT safely, responsibly and ethically	✓
5. Assess, provide feedback and report on student learning	5.1 Assess student learning	✓
	5.2 Provide feedback to students on their learning	✓
	5.3 Make consistent and comparable judgements	✓
	5.4 Interpret student data	✓
	5.5 Report on student achievement	✓
Professional Engagement 6. Engage in professional learning	6.1 Identify and plan professional learning needs	✓
	6.2 Engage in professional learning and improve practice	✓
	6.3 Engage with colleagues and improve practice	✓
	6.4 Apply professional learning and improve student learning	✓
7. Engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community	7.1 Meet professional ethics and responsibilities	✓
	7.2 Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements	✓
	7.3 Engage with the parents/carers	✓
	7.4 Engage with professional teaching networks and broader communities	✓

Reference List

Calamlam, J. & Mokshein, S. (2019). Cooperating teachers' mentoring moves during Internship of early childhood pre-service teachers. *Journal of Research, Policy & Practice of Teachers & Teacher Education*, 9(1), 20-32.

Goldhaber, D., & Kessler, V. (2019). What do we know about the effects of clinical practice experiences and teacher performance? (CALDER Policy Brief No. 19-1119). National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research.

Hallam, G., Harper, W., McCowan, C., Hauville, K., McAllister, L., & Creagh, T. (2008). ePortfolio use by University students in Australia: Informing excellence in policy and practice. Australian ePortfolio Project, Stage 1. Queensland University of Technology, Department of Teaching and Learning Support Services, Brisbane, Qld.

Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG). 2015. Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers. Canberra: Department of Education and Training.



Connect with the School of Education

Contact us

Email: admineducation@ecu.edu.au

Website: <https://www.ecu.edu.au/schools/education/overview>

Information contained in this handbook was correct at the time of printing and may be subject to change

CRICOS Provider No. 00279B TEQSA ID PRV12160, Australian University | ECS260514