

Early Years Great Careers

Grow. Lead. Succeed.



What do early childhood academics do?

Early childhood is a career for life, with opportunities for progression into leadership positions, including teaching in the tertiary education sector, for those who want to take the next step.

Lecturers, tutors, trainers and other educators in universities and TAFE institutions offer technical and vocational education and training and higher education. They help inspire and develop the next generation of early childhood professionals. Academics who are researchers within the tertiary education system may conduct studies and field work aimed at improving practice and knowledge about early childhood and early childhood education.

Early childhood academics:

- Prepare and deliver lectures, tutorials and practical classes.
- Assess student assignments and grade student performance.
- Supervise research students.
- Discuss with students their progress and/or aspirations.
- Plan courses in consultation with other staff, arrange course timetables.
- Serve on departmental or faculty committees dealing with general departmental and administrative concerns.

- Prepare departmental budgets and associated reports.
- Organise and conduct field trips and excursions or other learning activities.
- Research a specialised field of study and publish the findings in books or professional and academic journals.
- Attend meetings and conferences related to research.
- Provide professional consultative services to government and industry.

Fast facts

- Employment prospects in the early childhood sector are generally strong and growing.
- Job opportunities for early childhood lecturers and tutors in universities and TAFE/VET are expected to grow strongly.
- Starting salaries for VET and university lecturers range from \$50,856 – \$87,334 a year and increase depending on level of responsibility.
- VET and university lecturers may be employed on a full-time, part-time, contract or casual basis. With further training and experience, they may be promoted to a senior position of educational leadership, such as dean of a faculty or a head of school.

Future employment rating ★★★★★

*Future employment growth > 8.5 to 11% PA . Source: DEEWR

What should I study at school?

Useful subjects include English, maths or VET subjects of choice for the TAFE sector.

What should I study at university?

Qualifications will vary according to the type of academic position. Possibilities include:

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
Master of Education VET
Doctor of Education
Master of Education

What are my other career and leadership options?

Once qualified, management and leadership opportunities include tertiary education management roles within institutions, faculties or departments. Examples could include dean of a faculty, head of school or a government advisory role.

Related career options include early childhood, primary and secondary teacher, trainer, educational researcher or author.

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John McCartin Lecturer in Early
Childhood Education, Victoria University

What are your major qualifications?

I have a Bachelor of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma Childhood Development, Graduate Diploma Education (Early Childhood), Master of Education Studies and a Graduate Diploma and Postgraduate Diploma Psychology.

How long have you worked in early childhood?

I have worked in early childhood for 25 years and in my current role since 2005.

I spent 11 years as a kindergarten teacher before moving into parent and teacher education at the Lady Gowrie Child Centre (now Gowrie Victoria) and the Monash Education Centre. I worked for myself as an early childhood consultant before accepting a position as a kindergarten director in an Indigenous community in Cape York for three years.

What is a typical day?

Every day is different. My work involves teaching (and marking!), research, project work, student support, community work, course review and development and strategic planning.

What influenced your interest in an early childhood career?

My initial qualification was in Applied Science and my first job was as a technician at Taralye oral language centre for deaf children. Interacting with children and their parents in the kindergarten program and the audiology clinic sparked my interest in early childhood education.

What made you change to early childhood?

While working in biophysics at a large Melbourne hospital the then head of the Institute of Early Childhood Development asked if I was still interested in studying child development. I enrolled and completed a Graduate Diploma Child Development part-time, then a Graduate Diploma Education (Early Childhood) full-time before becoming a kindergarten teacher. I have worked in early childhood ever since.

What do you enjoy most about your career in early childhood?

Everything except the administration! It is an exciting, challenging time to work in early childhood. The early childhood team I work with is knowledgeable, skilled and committed and I continue to learn and grow as an educator, practitioner and researcher. Working with children, parents, students, teachers and other professionals keeps me fresh and motivated.

What is the best experience you have had as an early childhood professional?

There are a myriad of opportunities to make a difference to the lives of children and families every day – through supporting student teachers; hands-on work with children and families; liaising with other professionals for children with additional needs and more.

I cannot single out one standout example, but living and teaching in a remote Aboriginal community provided

extraordinary opportunities to help others and certainly made a difference in my life.

What would you say to others who might be considering a career in early childhood?

If you are people-oriented, flexible, spontaneous and enjoy challenges and learning and developing personally and professionally with a variety of employment options, then early childhood is the career for you.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

Working with children and families, teaching, researching and continuing to contribute to early childhood education and care.

Want to know more?

education.vic.gov.au/earlyyears Careers
deewr.gov.au
myfuture.edu.au
careersthatmatter.com.au
joboutlook.gov.au



All indicative salaries in the document are gross before tax a year for full time employees. Source: Published salary bands from major tertiary institutions.

Information regarding course and professional pre-requisites is of a general nature. Please consult a career practitioner and/or check with individual institutions to confirm specific course requirements.