

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For students from Western Sydney University participating in
Early Childhood Professional Experience Placements

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BEFORE PLACEMENT

Special Requirements

I am having issues enrolling in my Professional Experience Subject. What is stopping me?

Please check that you have met all the Special Requirements for this subject. The Special Requirements are related to the legislative requirements for educators in NSW and these are external requirements that must be met. [Click here](#) for more information.

Do I need to complete LANTITE if I am exiting with an M.Teach (Birth to 5 years)?

LANTITE is **NOT** required for students completing Professional Experience Birth – 2 Years or Professional Experience 3-5 years.

When do I need to complete LANTITE if I am completing the M.Teach (Birth to 12 years)?

LANTITE is an enrolment requirement for Professional Experience K-6. This requires you to satisfactorily complete both the Literacy and Numeracy components of LANTITE **prior to enrolment** into your final school based professional experience. This means that you must complete LANTITE (and have received your results) a minimum of the Semester **before** you are planning to register in your Professional Experience K-6 subject.

Credit for Prior Learning (CPL)

Is there any room for credits towards my professional placement based on my experience in early childhood settings over the past 3 years? I am currently working in an early childhood setting and the setting has an ECT waiver in respect of my position.

Students can apply for Credit for Prior Learning for Professional Experience Birth–2 years or Professional Experience 3-5 years if they have completed a similar subject at another University and completed the equivalent amount of Professional Experience days.

ACECQA is one of the accrediting bodies for the Master of Teaching B-5 Years/ Birth – 12 Years. ACECQA do not allow Credit for Prior Learning for Professional Experience completed in a lower-level qualification. Credit cannot be provided based on holding a waiver as the ECT in a setting.

Do I need to be fully vaccinated against COVID to undertake my placement?

As of 29 August 2022, yes you do. Alternatively, if you hold a medical contraindication certificate that expires after the last day of the placement, that may also be considered. If you have a medical contraindication certificate, please contact the PE Team at EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au immediately. Please note that many Early Childhood settings require staff (and hence Pre-service teachers) to have had three (3) COVID vaccinations.

What do I need to do before I start my placement?

Refer to PE Handbook – Section 1 Roles and Responsibilities

Do I need a name badge?

Yes. Pre-Service Teachers must order their own badge at least 4 weeks before the start of their placement. Please refer to instructions on how to order your Name Badge in vUWS. You only need to purchase your badge once as it can be used for all your professional experience placements.

Can I use my own name badge?

No, please see above for ordering details.

What is a conflict of interest?

For the context of Professional Experience, we categorise the following as a Conflict of Interest:

- You are currently employed at the early childhood setting (unless pre-approved by the Director of Professional Experience),
- You have relatives enrolled at the early childhood setting,
- You have relatives or close friends employed (siblings, parents, etc) at the early childhood setting,
- You have other close relationships with the setting (e.g. casual work, providing special classes at the setting).

You are not to attend an early childhood setting where your child/children currently attend.

Your connection with this early childhood setting is solely as a parent, and this potentially strain the parent-teacher relationship if your performance is unsatisfactory. Being on professional experience exposes you to private and confidential information about children and families, information that might not be suitable for you to be aware of as a fellow parent.

You cannot attend a setting for professional experience where you have a conflict of interest.

What do I do if I have identified a conflict of interest?

If there is an early childhood setting that you have identified as a conflict of interest, you need to record this information in the conflict-of-interest section of your profile on InPlace.

If you have been allocated to a school/centre and you believe this poses a conflict of interest, please email the placements team to notify them immediately on EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

What is InPlace?

InPlace serves as our student placement system, maintaining a database of schools and students in need of placement each semester. Instructions on how to use InPlace can be found [here](#)

What do I do if I have identified a conflict of interest and I am already allocated in InPlace?

Register your conflict of interest details in [InPlace](#) – there is a conflict of interest section. If you have already been allocated to the school/centre, please email the placements team to notify them immediately on EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

Can I do placement at the early childhood setting where I am working in a Diploma or Cert III role?

This is a conflict of interest, so the answer is no. When you are employed as a Diploma or Cert III qualified staff member you have a very different role to that of a teacher. It is often difficult for you and the setting to see you in the role of a teacher, and this causes issues for pre-service teachers.

Can I find my own placement?

No. Students must not organise their own placements, or approach settings directly for placement.

I prefer not to be allocated to a faith-based school. Can I submit such a preference?

Yes, you can update the religious preference section in InPlace with these details. For sensitive matters, please contact the placements team – EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

I don't have a car to get to and from placement. Will I have to travel far by public transport?

You must update InPlace with your preferred mode of transport to attend placement. Students must expect to travel up to 90 minutes from their place of residence as entered in MySR under term residence. While 90min is the maximum, we do aim to keep students within 60 minutes from their home if driving, 75 minutes on public transport where possible.

How far will I have to travel to my placement?

Students must expect to travel up to 90 minutes from their place of residence as entered in MySR under term residence. Any changes to a student's address in the 8 weeks prior to the scheduled start of placement must be emailed to the PE Team (EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au) as well as being updated by the student in MySR under term residence. While 90min is the maximum, we do aim to keep students within 60 minutes from their home if driving, 75 minutes on public transport where possible.

I moved house and forgot to update my address in MySR. What do I do?

You must update your term residential address in MySR. This information is then automatically fed into InPlace. Any changes to a student's address in the 8 weeks prior to the scheduled start of placement must be emailed to the PE Team (EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au) as well as being updated by the student in MySR under term residence. If not, your placement allocation may be based on your previous address.

I have been allocated a placement and it is more than a 90-minute commute from my home. What do I do?

Please contact Placements Team immediately by sending an email to EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

I have a medical condition and would like to apply to be considered for alternate arrangements for my placement. How do I do this?

Approval for a Placement Reasonable Adjustment Plan (PRAP) is required for any alternative arrangements to be acknowledged during placement. Your PIP needs to be finalised at least 6 weeks prior to the placement start date. This link will take you to [the Disabilities Team webpage](#) for more details.

I have a special event/holiday occurring during the placement period. Can I take leave and/or change my placement dates?

This is not normally considered. Students need to be available during the placement date range to attend placement. Students are informed of these dates at the start of semester. However, if the plans are outside your control, email the placement Subject Coordinator with the details for consideration, but there is no guarantee a request will be approved.

What do I do if I withdraw from placement before the start date?

Send an email to the Placements team EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au, as well as the Subject Coordinator and PE Academic Program Advisor immediately. We do not get notification through the student management system of your withdrawal, and we need to either remove you from our placement list or notify the center of your withdrawal.

Do I need to contact my allocated setting before the start of placement?

Yes. Refer to PE handbook and PE Checklist on vUWS.

What do I do if I get a Jury Summons before I start my placement?

As soon as you receive your Summons, please send a copy to the PE Team (EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au). We can provide a letter for you to send with your application for exemption.

When will I receive my placement allocation?

Your placement allocation will be available from InPlace 2 to 3 weeks prior to the placement start date.

When will I be given access to the PE Handbook?

You can find the PE Handbook on the SoE website; access it [here](#).

Will I have to attend any lectures or tutorials for my PE subjects prior to attending placement?

Yes. Both the PE Birth – 2 years (TEACH 7104) and PE 3-5 years (TEAC 7103) subjects have four compulsory face to face tutorials. You will also have compulsory module/lectures which must be completed to pass the unit.

DURING PLACEMENT

Am I required to attend university classes for other units whilst on professional experience?

No, your university timetable is structured so that no classes are scheduled during your professional experience placement. Students are expected to attend, be present and focussed during the entire day as specified in the PE Handbook. The only exception is if you have an advising meeting with the University Advisor (this maybe face-to-face or through zoom).

What do I do if I need to leave early each day to collect my children from school?

It is your responsibility to organise care for your children while you are on placement. You need to be putting in a full working day, because this is what will be required once you are working in a Centre. Students have ample notice to organise care before start of placement. If your childcare arrangements have changed suddenly, urgently contact the PE Academic Program Advisor. Your Initial Teacher Education Program has been accredited by ACECQA and NESAs on the basis of a specified number of professional experience hours.

What will I need to wear on placement?

You will be required to dress in attire in line with the individual setting's policy. Please ensure you talk to your mentor teacher about appropriate attire before you begin the placement. You must also wear your University Pre-Service Teacher Badge during your placement. You must wear closed in shoes and ensure that any jewelry does not pose a hazard for children or yourself.

Am I required to attend my placement every day?

Yes, pre-service teachers are required to attend the placement every day to meet the requirements for teaching.

What time will I start and finish my placement?

Each early childhood setting varies in its opening and closing hours. The Centre Director will be available to discuss the shift pattern with you. It is expected that you will complete a mix of shifts.

Attendance is mandatory at least 15 minutes prior to the start of your shift and until the end, ensuring that all tasks for the shift are completed. Meetings with your Mentor Teacher may need to be scheduled either before the commencement of your shift or at the end of your shift.

You are required to complete the daily attendance register, recording both arrival and departure times, and have it initialed by your Mentor Teacher.

What do I do if I am sick while I am undertaking my placement?

If you are sick for any days during your placement you must:

1. Contact the school and your University Advisor by 7.30am on the day of absence.
2. Complete an Absence From available on vUWS portal.
3. Negotiate with the setting to make up the days for your illness.

Note: It is not possible to make up missed days when lectures or tutorials are scheduled.

If a pre-service teacher is absent during their placement for 3 or more consecutive days, you will be required to provide a medical certificate.

What if something has come up unexpectedly and I want to take leave during placement. What do I do?

Pre-service teachers are not permitted to negotiate placements days with their Mentor Teachers, nor to absent themselves from their placements for matters such as holidays, weddings, childcare or work. Any special requests must be directed to the Professional Experience Team via Email:

EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

Can I delay my placement if I am sick or injured?

Yes, however, there is a process to follow. Please see the Professional Experience handbook for details.

I have injured myself while on placement, what do I need to do?

Pre-service teachers must follow the reporting procedures in their setting. Contact must be made with the University Advisor or the Professional Experience Team to report the injury. Please refer to the Professional Experience handbook for more information.

Can I attend school excursions while on placement?

Yes, it is expected that you attend excursions and other such activities with your Mentor Teacher.

I have a part-time job. Can I do my placement part-time?

No, regardless of your study pattern, professional experience placements are only offered full time. This is because many settings take students from other Universities and TAFE's. It is not possible for them to coordinate multiple pre-service teachers on placement (sometimes from different universities and programs) at the same time unless they attend full time. It is also the preference of settings, for consistency and continuity, which benefits the children and the pre-service teachers.

I cannot afford to take leave from work to do a full-time placement. Can I do a part-time placement?

No, as above. Professional Experience placement is fulltime. If you are under financial stress please contact [student welfare](#).

Who will support me while on placement?

You will have the support of a mentor teacher and your University Advisor. In some instances you may also have the support of the Centre Director.

What can I expect from my Mentor Teacher?

Please refer to Roles & Responsibilities section of the Professional Experience Handbook.

Is there support if I am having difficulty during placement?

Yes. Speak with your Mentor Teacher about your concerns. Try to be specific in identifying what you are concerned about. You need to speak to your University Advisor if you are unsuccessful in your discussions with the Mentor Teacher.

Your University Advisor is always available to discuss concerns that you may have. It is important that you make contact early rather than leave it until it is too late.

How do I find out who my University Advisor is?

The Professional Experience Team will email you once your University Advisor has been allocated. Their details will then be available in InPlace.

My Mentor Teachers didn't receive any documentation before my placement. Where can they get this.

Ask the Mentor Teacher to contact the Placements Team - EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au

I have concerns about my preparation from EXPO. Where can I get assistance?

There are resources, exemplars, tutorial notes and hints available on the PE 3-5 years and PE Birth-2 years vUWS site. Revisit the content in the vUWS site. Your University Advisor and the Subject Convenor will also be able to answer questions related to the EXPO.

What happens if I decide to self-withdraw after my placement has started?

You must notify your University Advisor and the Professional Experience Team immediately if for any reason you wish to withdraw from the placement. Please note: your Subject Coordinator can only award a Satisfactory Grade or an Unsatisfactory Grade for Professional Experience Subjects. A withdrawal (W) grade is dependent on your individual [application](#).

How do I get a copy of the final report for my Mentor Teacher to complete?

Report templates are emailed to the School PE Coordinator to distribute direct to the Mentor Teacher. Your Mentor Teacher can ask the School PE Coordinator or email the placements team EduPEX@westernsydney.edu.au to request a copy if they need one.

AFTER PLACEMENT

What happens if I fail my placement?

Students will go through the At-Risk Process that is outlined in Section 3 – Progress and assessment, in the Professional Experience Handbook. Please refer to the section regarding the outcome of this process. Students will be able to reattempt the subject in a later semester.

What documents do I have to submit after my placement?

Students are required to submit a final report and their time sheet on vUWS. Please ensure these are signed by you **and** your mentor teacher prior to submission. Along with this, some subjects will require additional documents (such as the case study or reflections) that will be outlined on the relevant section of the subject learning guide.

How do I submit my final report?

There is a page on the vUWS site for submission of documents. Please ensure when submitting all documents that they are in PDF, legible, and signed by both Mentor Teacher and student (photos/images are not accepted).

When will I do my EXPO Presentation?

The EXPO will be completed after the final placement. Approaching the end of your placement, you will be advised on the vUWS site of the EXPO schedule. You will present to your hub group. Your presentation needs to be no longer than 15 minutes. More information will be available on vUWS.

What if I can't attend my scheduled EXPO?

The EXPO is an assessment activity and like all assessments, if you are unable to meet the deadline you must submit an Extension Request through WesternNow. Please ensure you contact the University Advisor to apologise for being unable to attend. You will then need to contact the Early Childhood APA Professional Experience to reschedule your EXPO.

How do I get a copy of my final report?

Your Mentor Teacher will provide you with a copy that you need to submit to vUWS on the final day of your placement. It is suggested that you sight and sign the report on this day and then scan and submit on vUWS. It is essential that you save a copy of your report. You must submit all your professional experience reports to NESAs for Teacher accreditation purposes. If you are exiting with a Birth – 5 years qualification you will begin this process after EXPO and release of your results.

I need a letter for AITSL.

Please complete this [form](#) to request an AITSL Supervised Teaching Practice statement from Western Sydney University. Approval may take up to three weeks. If currently enrolled, processing begins after your final grade release, with an additional three weeks for statement generation.