Professional Experience - Mentor Information
EDU30003 Curriculum planning and assessment for infants: Practicum 3

Required days: 10 days full time. Any missed days must be made up.
Required setting: Early Childhood Education Setting
Age Group: Birth to two years

Overview:
This is the third Professional Experience Unit of the Bachelor of Education (Early childhood). Pre-service Teachers are to complete 10 days of supervised professional experience within the allocated teaching block. In preparation for their professional experience in early childhood settings, Pre-service Teachers will engage with unit materials that prepare them for the professional experience, introducing them to curriculum planning and assessment for infants in early childhood education. Whilst on professional experience, Pre-service Teachers are expected to involve themselves in the life of the early childhood setting and reflect on their practice and performance in discussion with their Mentor and their Swinburne Online eLearning Advisor (online tutor, also known to as eLA). Pre-service Teachers will be introduced to all aspects of teaching, eventually taking responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating an indoor and outdoor curriculum including routines for a minimum of three days. Given the length of the practicum and the age of the children, it would not be appropriate for Pre-Service Teachers to change everything in the existing curriculum. Pre-Service Teachers are however required to plan and implement an indoor and outdoor curriculum in which they make a significant contribution and introduce some original ideas. Ideally Pre-Service Teachers will be encouraged to engage with contemporary styles of documentation including the use of photographs. Please discuss any restrictions, policies and guidelines with the Pre-Service Teachers.

The role of the Mentor in the professional setting is crucial to both the University and the Pre-service Teacher in facilitating and supporting professional experience, and we acknowledge and appreciate the significant time that is devoted to this task. In an effort to ensure that this experience is rewarding for all parties, we hope that the information contained in this document, clarifies and assists in defining the role.

The expectations from the Mentor:

- Familiarise yourself with the Swinburne Online Professional Experience Handbook and website.
- Discuss the professional experience requirements with the Pre-service Teacher and provide an induction.
- Communicate the philosophy, policies and procedures and share expectations for professional conduct.
- Encourage the Pre-service Teacher’s involvement in all aspects of the educational setting’s life when appropriate (e.g. excursions, special events, staff meetings, etc).
- Guide the Pre-service Teacher in establishing and maintaining professional relationships with children, staff and families.
- Share relevant information about children’s backgrounds, health, development and routines.
- Discuss any guidelines for observing children and taking photographs of environments and/ or children.
- Encourage increasing responsibility for teaching, routines and the curriculum as the professional experience progresses.
- Provide the Pre-service Teacher with support and guidance with all aspects of planning.
- Negotiate planning time (around the minimum of 25 hours contact time with children)
- Share your planning for and assessment of children’s learning including links to the EYLF.
- Model and explain techniques and strategies for teaching.
- Share and discuss developmental expectations and behaviour guidance strategies.
- Observe the Pre-service Teacher teaching and provide ongoing, honest and constructive feedback.
- Schedule meetings to discuss planning and progress.
The reporting responsibility of the Mentor:

We acknowledge the challenge and responsibility that comes with assessing Pre-service teachers. While we may not physically visit the school, support is available through the Swinburne Online website and the Professional Placement Team. We place great faith in your professional judgement and request an honest validation of the Pre-service Teacher’s progress and final assessment. If you feel that an unsatisfactory result is warranted, your decision will be supported and appreciated by the University.

1. Discuss the Pre-Service Teacher’s progress midway through the professional experience (day 5). If a Pre-service Teacher is making unsatisfactory progress, the Mentor is required to contact the Professional Placement Team immediately and if requested by the team, complete the Professional Experience Support Plan in collaboration with the Nominated Supervisor. This is to be submitted to the Swinburne Online Professional Placement Team by the Mentor.

2. Please complete and submit the final report form, immediately on or the day after the final placement day. For a detailed explanation of the assessment and reporting process, please refer the Professional Experience Handbook. The Mentor is required to sign off on the number of completed days. Any missed days need to be made up in consultation with the Mentor teacher and the missed days policy outlined in the Professional Experience Handbook.

Weekly Expectations:
Throughout this professional experience, Pre-service Teachers are expected to undertake the specific teaching roles that are outlined below, as a minimum requirement. Any additional teaching opportunities are at the discretion of the Mentor Teacher and in negotiation with the Pre-service Teacher.

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<tr>
<th>Week One</th>
<th>Pre-service Teacher Teaching expectations</th>
<th>Mentor expectations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Familiarise self with the setting and relevant policies, documents and procedures</td>
<td>• Introduce Pre-service Teacher (PST) to children, families and staff</td>
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<td>• Establish relationships with children, staff and families</td>
<td>• Discuss strategies to assist the PST in establishing relationships with students and families</td>
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<td>• Actively support the implementation of the overall curriculum</td>
<td>• Share strategies for documenting observations and discuss issues and requirements relating to confidentiality and the use of photographs</td>
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<td>• Scaffold learning with individual children.</td>
<td>• Discuss individual children’s development, interest, routines, needs and relevant background information</td>
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<td>• Support small group play</td>
<td>• Share policies about and support participation in nappy, sleep and meal routines</td>
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<td>• Under supervision, participate in routines including nappy changing, meal and rest times</td>
<td>• Share prior and current planning documents with the Pre-service Teacher</td>
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<td>• Document observations of children’s learning in routines, indoor and outdoor experiences</td>
<td>• Provide feedback on PST’s written observations and interpretations of these</td>
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<td>• Identify and record children’s interests and strengths</td>
<td>• Provide opportunities for the PST to take increased responsibility for the curriculum</td>
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<td>• In consultation with your mentor, select a focus child to observe and plan a learning experience based on their interests and strengths</td>
<td>• Provide feedback on the learning experience plan</td>
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<td>• Gain permission to record observations and if appropriate use photographs for assessments</td>
<td>• Support the planning of the curriculum; help to interpret observations, share knowledge, question PST’s intentions and discuss ideas</td>
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<td>• Record reflections on your professional conduct, communication and relationships with children, families and teachers</td>
<td>• Provide prompts to encourage reflective practice</td>
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<td>• In collaboration with your Mentor, begin planning the indoor and outdoor curriculum</td>
<td>• Schedule a meeting with the Pre-service Teacher to discuss progress by the end of the week</td>
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<td>• Ask for feedback from your Mentor and set goals for improvement</td>
<td>• If PST is making UNSATISFACTORY progress please contact Swinburne Online immediately</td>
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<td>• Provide constructive feedback on all aspects of teaching and set goals for the following week</td>
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Week Two

- Implement your individual child’s learning experience plan for a **minimum of three days**
- Use planned teaching strategies to support learning in your learning experience
- Evaluate the learning experience plan and assess the focus child’s learning
- Actively participate in all aspects of the curriculum including routines
- Interact with families in a professional manner during drop off and pick up times
- Share your knowledge, observations and questions with other educators
- Record observations about how children engage in your planned experience
- Finalise your curriculum plan and take full responsibility for its implementation for a **minimum of three days**
- Document children’s participation and learning in the planned curriculum in a format that can be shared with children’s families and other teachers eg narratives, photographs, learning stories
- Continue to reflect on your practice and ask your mentor for feedback

- Provide feedback on the implementation of the individual learning experience plan
- Discuss the relationships between developmental expectations and behaviour guidance
- Share any relevant data such as growth charts, developmental checklists/guidelines or important background information that may inform the planning and assessment of children’s learning
- Collaborate with the PST to finalise the indoor and outdoor curriculum plan including routines
- Provide opportunities for the PST to take full responsibility for the curriculum for a minimum of three days
- Provide feedback on plans, documentation and effectiveness of teaching
- Provide support in the evaluation of plans and the assessment of learning
- **Complete the Final Report on the last day. A copy is to be made for the setting, the Pre-service Teacher and one to be sent to the Professional Placements Team**
- Provide constructive feedback on all aspects of teaching and set goals for future development
- **Negotiate and schedule any missed days**

**Unit Assessment Requirements:**
Throughout the professional experience, the Pre-service Teacher will be expected to work on the following tasks for assessment by Swinburne Online:

1. One Individual Learning Experience Plan using the Swinburne Online Template
2. A Curriculum Plan including the indoor and outdoor environments and routines
3. Two examples of documentation that assess and communicate children’s learning
4. Professional reflections with a focus on relationships with children and communication with families

**Note:** As a Mentor your feedback on teaching performance, written plans and reflective practice is important and valued; however you are not required to ‘mark’ written work.

**Supportive resources:**

Should you have any queries and/or concerns throughout the practicum, please contact the Professional Placement Team:

Phone: 1300 797 765  Email: placements@swinburneonline.com