

# Early Childhood Education and care summary

## Introduction

### Purpose

Studying a childcare qualification requires a mix of practical skills, theoretical knowledge, and time management. At CDU TAFE, you can study a Certificate III or Diploma in Early Childhood Education. The Certificate III is the minimum requirement to work in Early Childhood, and the Diploma is for those wanting to be Room Leaders or Centre Directors. The diploma course requires more depth of knowledge, critical thinking and possibly complex client needs.

## Early childhood studies

Understanding and applying childcare policies such as the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the National Quality Framework (NQF) is an essential part of your professional development in early childhood education. These frameworks serve as the foundation for delivering high-quality care and education in Australia, guiding educators to create learning environments that are nurturing, inclusive, and conducive to child development.

### Certificate or diploma?

While a Certificate III focuses on foundational knowledge and practical skills, simpler case studies and the ability to recall information for routine tasks, the Diploma course requires more depth of knowledge, critical thinking and possibly complex client needs. Whereas a Certificate 3 focuses on foundational knowledge and practical skills, simpler case studies and the ability to recall information for routine tasks.

### Early Years Learning Framework/National Quality Framework

You need to read and understand childcare policies (like the EYLF and the NQF) and use them in real-life situations. To understand them, you need to pick out key ideas, find important words, and see how they apply to your work. This is because they provide the foundation for quality childcare and early childhood education in Australia.

You will need to know how to break down complex policies into key concepts – like learning outcomes, principles and practices, how to highlight and summarise important sections and look for keywords and definitions. You will need to identify how EYLF principles apply to everyday childcare settings and link these frameworks to child development theories.

At diploma level, you might need to compare the EYLF and NQF with state and national laws to ensure compliance and learn how to reference frameworks correctly for your assignments.

## Completing workplace documents

In an Early Childhood setting, completing workplace documents accurately and professionally is essential for maintaining clear communication between parents and staff, ensuring child safety and meeting legal requirements. To complete documents effectively, always use clear, factual language and avoid opinions or assumptions. When completing incident report forms, describe what you saw and heard rather than interpreting behaviour. Information must stay confidential, following both workplace policies and legal guidelines to comply with early childhood standards. Proofread your documents, or ask your supervisor for help if you are unsure.

**Incident report:** As an early-years educator you are required to complete an incident report if a child in your care has an accident. You have a duty of care to protect children from harm, provide a safe environment and manage accidents. You must inform the parent and complete the form within 24 hours of the incident. Contact can be through phone call, email or the centre app.

**Observational record:** As an educator, you will regularly complete observation records as part of your role in a childcare centre. These records help track a child's developmental progress, ensuring they are meeting developmental milestones and receiving extra support if needed. Observations also help educators plan individual activities based on the child's interests and keep families updated on their child's growth. Additionally, observation records are required to meet the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and maintain compliance with quality standards.