**EPE540 Specialist Knowledges and Pedagogy (EC/Primary stream)**

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| Unit title | **Specialist Knowledges and Pedagogy** |
| Number of professional experience days | 10 days incl. 1 week block in a primary school |
| Academic requirements | Case-study: critique of student learning relevant to subject specialization |
| Minimum in-school teaching requirements | 1 week of full time planning and teaching with focus on subject specialist area |
| In-school assessment  (submitted by PST to unit lecturer, copied to mentor and uploaded to Learnline) | Interim report (submit at midway point)  Final report (submit at completion) |

**Unit Purpose**

This practicum unit offers preservice teachers (in Primary and Early Childhood & Primary Streams) an opportunity to integrate discipline-specific knowledge with quality pedagogical practice in primary school settings. The focus of this unit is to consolidate expertise aligning prevailing curricula requirements with specialist, pedagogical content knowledge. The unit should be undertaken either concurrent with, or following the successful completion of one of the following specialist elective units:

ELA522: Primary Specialisation: Languages Other Than English  
ELA515 Primary Specialisation: English and Literature  
EMA522 Primary Specialisation: Mathematics  
ESC522 Primary Specialisation: Science and Technology  
EST533 Primary Specialisation: Special Education, Language and Literacy

This unit requires successful completion of two components. The first is up to seven weeks of in-depth study of learning theories, literature and quality pedagogical approaches. The second component consists of 10 days of professional experience in an educational setting. Preservice teachers will undertake specific assessable activities, including personal reflection, planning and teaching that align to the theoretical focus provided.

All students enrolled in this unit must provide a current police check/working with children card to the educational setting and Education Placement Office prior to the commencement of the professional experience. More information is available at: <http://www.cdu.edu.au/education/inschool>.

**Unit Outcomes: on successful completion of this unit the PST will be able to:**

1. Develop lesson plans with explicit synthesis of specialist pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge
2. Critically evaluate relevant principles and policies and apply constructive feedback from mentors and colleagues to improve teaching and learning practices.
3. Integrate discipline-specific knowledge with quality pedagogical practice in primary school settings
4. Appraise the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Graduate) by collecting supporting evidence and reflecting upon own practices.

**Academic Requirements**

Academic knowledge requirements are usually completed before a preservice teacher (PST) undertakes placement. PSTs apply, evaluate and refine this knowledge during their professional experience placement. Requirements and learning materials relating to the academic component of this unit are available to the PST on Learnline, the on-line learning environment.

## In-School Requirements

## Teaching expectations: with the support of their mentor teachers, PSTs should take every opportunity to design, teach and assess more than the minimum required learning activities.

## Daily Journal: PSTs must keep a daily journal recording and reflecting on their observations, activities and experiences. Mentor teachers are asked to sight this journal and verify this in the final report.

## Mentor Teacher Feedback: The Mentor teacher provides regular written and verbal feedback and guidance throughout the entire block of professional experience. Templates for written feedback are available here:

## <https://www.cdu.edu.au/education-placements/mentor-resources>

## CDU Contacts

**Before placement**: The Education Placement Office ([Inschool@cdu.edu.au](mailto:Inschool@cdu.edu.au) Phone: 08 8946 6602) administers the placing of prior-to-school and school placements for all preservice teachers, and the payment of mentor teachers.

**During and after placement**: the CDU lecturer who delivers the academic component of this unit administers the assessment forms and can offer additional support to PSTs during placement if needed.

# Suggested guidelines

The guidelines below are common to all Professional Experience placements, from the early, shorter placements which involve limited amounts of PST planning and teaching, to the later, longer placements which involve block weeks of full-time planning and teaching. Please interpret and modify these guidelines based on the requirements of the placement and on contextual factors such as the learning environment, student cohort and the needs and goals of the preservice teacher.

The primary focus of the placement is on the PST’s development of professional knowledge, skills and ways of thinking. Activities such as observation, reflection, planning, teaching and feedback should all be undertaken and supported with the purpose of PST growth and learning in mind.

**Resources referred to below can be found at:**

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/education-placements/placement-resources>

<https://www.cdu.edu.au/education-placements/mentor-resources>

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|  | PRESERVICE TEACHER (PST) | MENTOR TEACHER |
| Before the placement | * **Contact** mentor teacher to clarify details and initial expectations of placement. * Give mentor teacher copies of the **requirements and assessment** forms. * Prepare for the **commitment** of a school day:   + 20 minutes before the students start school   + at least one hour after school finishes, depending upon the school activities | * Establish schedule and initial expectations of **attendance** for the preservice teacher. * Familiarise yourself with the **requirements and assessment** forms provided by PST. |
| First part of the placement | **Introductions and expectations** | |
| * Establish with mentor teacher **goals and expectations** for placement * **Introduce** yourself to your class(es), aim to learn student names within 5 days. * **Develop familiarity** with school staff, routines, procedures by pro-active involvement | * Discuss **goals and expectations** for placement. Begin to plan how you can best help PST achieve these. This might mean organising for PST to observe or work with other staff in the school * **Introduce** PST to the principal and other staff * **Inform** PST of school routines they’ll participate in (staff meetings, yard duties etc.) and procedures they’ll follow (safety, behaviour etc.) |
| **PST’s observations and reflections** | |
| * Complete **observation activities** using forms from Placement Resources and synthesise thinking in reflective journal. * Discuss **reflective journal entries** (on observations and own teaching activities) with mentor – how will what you’re observing influence your own planning and teaching practice? | * Identify **observation focus points** (e.g. transitions, literacy support, scaffolding, differentiation, use of language, resources etc.) * Discuss selected **reflective journal entries.** Support PST in drawing conclusions that will improve their skills and practices |
| **Planning and beginning to teach** | |
| * Establish how you will receive **feedback** from mentor, in both written and verbal forms. Select feedback forms from Placement Resources to use for written feedback if appropriate * Every learning activity delivered requires a **written plan**. Use one of the planning templates located in Placement Resources or design your own template in conjunction with your mentor teacher. * Establish a schedule for **timely submission of planning** for mentor feedback. * Gather, evaluate and discuss with mentor **resources for planning** * Discuss with mentor **planning constraints** such as established behaviour routines and curriculum requirements that your planning will incorporate * Work as a **co-professional** in the classroom, team teaching and supporting students individually and in small groups * If ready, or if required, **teach** or co-teach some whole class learning activities * Seek and apply **feedback** from mentor, other staff and students to improve planning and teaching performance * Complete **Interim Report** in discussion with mentor and establish clear learning goals and strategies for second part of placement. Email to unit lecturer, copying to mentor and upload to Learnline | * Establish when and how timely **feedback** (written and verbal) will be given on lesson plans and teaching. Feedback templates are in Mentor Resources. * Discuss needs of **individual students** in class and classroom management strategies and **routines** that it would be useful for the PST to adopt * Determine when and how **the minimum teaching requirements** of the placement will be met (this might be a sequence of single lessons, or a block of full time planning and teaching) * Offer **planning support** in the form of co-planning, and by sharing own programming, resourcing and assessment practices as PST begins to plan * Offer opportunities, if PST is ready, for increased **responsibility** and autonomy in planning, teaching and managing class activities * Offer **feedback** on PST’s observations, planning and teaching that will lead to their growth and improve their planning for teaching * Determine in discussion with PST where evidence of their proficiency fits with the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (**APST**) * Complete **Interim Report** in discussion with PST and focusing on what has been learned, what is to be learned, and how, in second part of placement |

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| Second and final part of the placement | Continue with observation, reflection, planning and teaching activities from first part of placement and:   * Ensure **minimum teaching requirement** is met * Engage in as much **additional** planning, teaching and assessing of individuals, small groups and the whole class as is appropriate * Become more pro-active in **feedback** discussions with mentor by offering evaluations of own practice and suggestions for next steps in own learning | * Continue to offer planning and teaching **support** as required for PST to make progress * Offer **feedback** and discuss PST’s own reflections on their observations and the evidence they provide of their proficiency and progress against the APST   **Extend discussions** beyond instrumental considerations of individual lessons to include, for example:   * Development of learners’ positive attitudes, perceptions and engagement with learning * Fostering relationships with learners and communication strategies * Ethics, law and duty of care * Learning intentions, success criteria, feedback strategies * Australian Curriculum and/or EYLF. * The language of the profession * Emergent teacher identity and teacher resilience resources |
| Last day | * Complete **Final Report** in discussion with mentor, offering evidence of proficiency against APST in the form of articulated knowledge, demonstrated practice and artefacts such as student work. Email to unit lecturer, copying to mentor and upload to Learnline | * Complete **Final Report** in discussion with PST and focusing on what has been learned over the placement, professional strengths and challenges, and future developmental goals * Complete mentor payment forms and submit with a copy of the final report to Inschool@cdu.edu.au |