

Specific Requirements for PREX313 – Professional Experience Birth to 2 yrs or 3 to 5 yrs

This unit involves a supervised **20 day block** Professional Experience placement in an early childhood setting. It provides additional opportunities for observing, planning, teaching and reflecting with a specific focus on young children aged from **three to five years**. Placement for this unit must be undertaken in a different centre/setting from the PREX 310 and PREX 311 placements.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit the student teacher will be able to:

- demonstrate advanced communication and effective interactions with children, colleagues and families;
- record and interpret relevant information about individual children and small groups using a range of theories and approaches;
- effectively implement all components of an educational planning cycle;
- competently organize and manage all aspects of the learning environment;
- thoughtfully reflect on her/his own professional actions and qualities;
- demonstrate acceptable standards of communication and professional responsibility with attention to relevant UNE Graduate Attributes (ECE generic learning outcome).

Overview of requirements of student teacher and Supervising Teacher

	STUDENT TEACHER	SUPERVISING TEACHER
Prior to the beginning of your placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your supervisor to establish the relationship (a visit is preferable. Be sure to ascertain a convenient time). • Complete Settling into Professional Experience Questionnaire in conjunction with supervisor. • If possible clarify details regarding class(es) and initial expectations of placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain an understanding of the overall expectations for the professional experience unit. • Provide student teacher with appropriate information to guide any prior planning or programming required. • Respond to the Student Teacher Professional Experience Folder when submitted.
First week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the settling in questionnaire along with the Supervising Teacher. • Engage in observation of the environment and become familiar with resources, policies and centre routines. • Over first three days focus on undertaking close observation of the children and the teacher(s), their interactions and relationships. • By the end of week 1, complete formal plans for at least two teaching and learning experiences implement and evaluate these including discussion with Supervising Teacher. (See guide for pedagogical engagements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientate the student teacher to the children, teaching spaces, centre, staff, routines and expectations. • Model effective teaching practices with the children, discussing teaching routines and strategies employed, with the student teacher. • Establish a clear program of expectations for the student teacher for first week, including discussing with the student teacher teaching and learning experiences to be planned and implemented. • Guide the development of observation, planning and reflection. • Closely observe and discuss student teacher's practice providing regular honest, written and oral feedback. Timely feedback is vital for their professional development. • Should you have any concerns regarding the student teacher's ability to pass the professional experience, refer to 'student at risk, procedures and contact University.
Week 3 and 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build teaching responsibility across the week in negotiation with your Supervising Teacher. • Plan for teaching and learning experiences for this time so that by the end of Week 4 you are teaching/overseeing/planning the majority of the 5 working days. Written plans to be formulated and discussed with supervisor prior to teaching. • Continue to engage in more complex, in depth teaching and learning interactions. • By the end of Week 2 student teacher should be taking responsibility for at least 2 full days of the centre's program (reflecting use of the centre's program). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish clear expectations for week 2, including teaching and learning experiences, activities and resources in which the student teacher is to be involved including planning. • Give oral and written feedback daily to guide student teacher, in conjunction with the Feedback and Evaluation booklet. • Facilitate the student teacher developing an understanding of centre wide and community functioning. • Complete the Final Report by end the end of week 4. Student teacher receives the original copy of the report. • Supervising teacher emails the report to the Office for Professional Learning. Ensure it is signed and dated prior to emailing.

PREX 913: Professional Experience tasks for Birth–2 Years or 3–5 years for the 20-day block

Portfolio

Student teachers will compile a portfolio so that all sample document notes, observations, plans etc are kept in one folder. Information contained in this portfolio will form part of the documentation used to substantiate that you have met the Professional Practice Learning Outcomes for PREX 913. The Portfolio will not be assessed. It is a document of work that reflects learning experiences undertaken during the Professional Practice. Thus, it can be used as a reference tool to assist with the supervision and evaluation of your work by your supervising teacher while on Professional Experience. It will also be used as a reference tool for self-reflection.

Structure of Portfolio

Degree of Program Planning

By the time you do this unit you are well into your teaching career. As such the level of responsibility undertaken during your Professional Experience must reflect this advanced stage of your studies.

We recognise that all centres are very different in how they plan their programs and understand that as a student teacher you will be entering an environment in which the planning of the curriculum is in full swing. It is your responsibility to negotiate your level and degree of involvement in this planning phase with the centre staff. In most cases, you would be responsible for a large part of this collaborative process. You are expected to undertake small group and individual experiences (both indoor and outdoor) during the course of the Practicum. Remember that at all times you are a part of a collaborative team in planning for young children's learning and as such you are expected to maintain shared understanding of the program for the week.

Materials are to be organised in the following three sections

1. General information
2. Observation
3. Planning and implementation of learning experiences
4. Self reflective journal

1. General information

This section should contain a list of children's names, ages, approximate timetables and days (or times) of attendance, policies, procedures, centre philosophy etc. This information must be collected during your orientation.

Remember to refer only to children's first names in your list to maintain confidentiality.

2. Observations

(a) This section should contain concise observations of children (anecdotal, running records, time sample etc) concentrating on 4 or 5 focus children and group observations in relation to small group activities. In this way you gradually accumulate valuable information to provide you with a detailed knowledge of each child in a group context and their needs and interests.

You will also need to separate focus and whole group observations and the focus group so that anecdotal observations can be recorded clearly.

It is advisable to use separate pages for each child so as to prevent confusion.

(b) This section should include observations of the environmental setting both inside and outside. You may choose to draw floor plans as a method of familiarising yourself with the environment prior to the prac period. Most of your observations will be undertaken during your orientation/single days with follow up observations during your Professional Experience week.

3. Planning and implementation of learning experiences

Students are expected to plan, implement and evaluate a series of learning experiences that are responsive to the children's interests and needs. The experiences provided must link back to the observations of the focus children in both individual and group contexts. It is expected that you will be responsible for the major part of the program for the Professional Experience week. This may include a series of both indoor and outdoor experiences, small group times, etc. You will need to work in close collaboration with the centre teaching staff to ensure that the program for the week builds on and enhances the centre's regular program. Work alongside your supervising teacher so that you both agree that the program developed suits the interests of the children and the needs of the centre.

This planning and implementation phase of the Professional Experience will be individual to each student in terms of the resources, materials etc needed. You will be expected to meet the planning and implementation requirements by covering the following areas.

Plans should indicate a clear relationship to earlier observations. Statements about the focus of the plan (i.e. the purpose of the plan) are important. They may be formally stated (as specific objectives) or less formally stated, but the intention must be clear. Children's names must be included, even if the plan is directed to a small group of children.

Implementation details should include resources, arrangement of the environment, strategies to interest children and support their exploration.

Evaluations should cover 3 basic areas:

- Observation (of child involvement and own involvement)
- Interpretation (How effective was the plan? What was achieved?)
- Possible follow-up ideas. (What would be done differently next time? How could you extend the child's learning, interest, experiences from this point on?)

4. Self-reflective journal

This section should contain personal diary entries for the Professional Experience period, with reflective statements about each day's events, your learning outcomes and your personal/professional responses etc.

This journal is about you as a person/professional and your roles and practices. Use this as an opportunity to focus on what you know and where you have grown and whether you felt that you have met your own goals.

Once again, the **Self-Reflective Journal will not be assessed**.

However, it will be these self-reflective journal/diary entries that will be shared with your supervisor to provide evidence to support the learning outcomes of the Professional Experience Evaluation Form. It is, therefore, in your best interests to take the time to complete one reflective entry each day of your Professional Experience.

- Your reflection should not only contain descriptive details of what occurred during your day and how you felt about that, but also show evidence that you have considered the events and reflected on your practice.
- This reflective process will also involve personal and professional documentation, thinking, discussions, self study. These reflections will become the basis of your personal/professional journal entries.

NOTE: Both Portfolio and Self-Reflective Journal are not assessed by the lecturer of this unit. Students need to provide this information to their supervising teachers as evidence of meeting all the requirements for successfully completing the Professional Experience.

