Education (Early Childhood)

About this area of study

Teaching is the largest profession in Australia. Over two hundred thousand teachers work in ten thousand schools teaching over three million students. Most teachers work in state or independent primary and secondary schools teaching children and teenagers. Many others work in pre-schools or childcare centres with very young children, in special education with people of all ages, or with older teenagers and adults in institutes of technical and further education (TAFE)/vocational education and training (VET), community education centres, private colleges, universities and workplaces.

Unlike other professions, everybody has some knowledge and experience of schools, and the roles teachers play in them, because everybody has been to school. Most of us think we know what the job of teaching involves, but often we are not aware of all the things a teacher does as well as teach in the classroom.

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Teachers are able to specialise in a wide variety of areas

- Early Childhood/Pre School
- Secondary School
- Physical Education
- Special Education
- English as a Second Language (ESL)/Adult Migrant Education

Other specialist roles within schools include: art or music teacher, school psychologist or counsellor, school administrator and professional development coordinator. These roles usually require a specific course of study and qualification in place of, or in addition to, a bachelor's degree of education or teaching.

Refer to the Victorian Institute of Teaching guidelines for full information on the level of study necessary in order to teach specialist subjects in Victorian government schools www.vit.vic.edu.au

Key skills and attributes that graduates demonstrate include

- Knowledge of a variety of teaching, learning and assessment strategies
- Curriculum knowledge
- High level organisational skills, particularly time management
- High level communication skills
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team
- Flexibility, adaptability and patience
- Confidence and assertiveness
- Capacity and willingness to engage in ongoing professional development

Training and registration

It is important to check with the relevant state organisation regarding training and registration requirements.

In Victoria to work in Children's services such as Child care centres and kindergartens you must hold a a two-year diploma of children's services or equivalent, from a TAFE institution or other approved registered training organisation.

To teach in Children's services you must hold a four-year degree, for example, a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education or equivalent from a University. This degree covers the education requirements of young children from birth to five year-olds and will qualify you as a teacher in childcare centres, kindergartens and early learning centres.

Teachers in all Victorian schools (government and independent) need to be registered by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). For more information visit the VIT website www.vit.vic.edu.au

Courses offered by Deakin University include

- Bachelor of Physical Education
- Bachelor of Teaching (secondary) combined with Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Teaching (science) combined with Bachelor of Science
- Graduate Diploma of Education (applied learning)

Labour market information

Grads online has information regarding graduate salaries and where graduates go after completing their course www.gradsonline.com.au

Job Outlook has information about the labour market outlook http://joboutlook.gov.au

Related occupations

- Day care facilitator
- Occasional care facilitator
- Early intervention services officer
- Playgroup facilitator
- Toy library organiser

An industry career profile, salary and other employment information can be obtained from the My Future website www.myfuture.edu.au

Descriptions of occupations can be found at The Job Guide www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au

Employers

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development www.education.vic.gov.au

Independent Schools Victoria www.independentschools.vic.edu.au

Edstaff www.edstaff.com.au

Museum of Victoria www.museumvictoria.com.au

Eastern Regional Libraries www.erl.vic.gov.au

For specific employment opportunities visit the following sites

Childcare Jobs www.childcarejobs.com.au

Childcare Careers www.childcarecareers.com.au

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/careers/vacs/advacssch.htm

Independent Schools Victoria www.independentschools.vic.edu.au

Catholic Education Office http://web.ceomelb.catholic.edu.au

Deakin University Jobshop www.deakin.edu.au/jobshop

Seek www.seek.com.au

My Career www.mycareer.com.au

Career One www.careerone.com.au

Professional associations

Free Kindergarten Association of Victoria Inc www.fka.com.au

Early Childhood Australia www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Early Childhood Teachers' Association http://ecta.org.au

SDN Children's Services Inc www.sdn.org.au

Association of Graduates in Early Childhood Studies www.agecs.org.au

Victorian Institute of Teachers www.vit.vic.edu.au