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Children's Education and Care

Industry Reference Committee

Draft 2018 Industry Skills Forecast

For Public Consultation

Skills Forecast

Name of IRC: Children's Education and Care

Name of SSO: SkillsIQ

About SkillsIQ Ltd.

SkillsIQ supports 17 Industry Reference Committees representing diverse 'people-facing' sectors. These sectors provide services to people in a variety of contexts such as customer, patient or client. The Industry Reference Committees are collectively responsible for overseeing the development and update of training products, including qualifications, serving the skills needs of sectors comprising almost 50 per cent of the Australian workforce.

Sector Overview

Workers who come under the ambit of this IRC provide education, care and support to children under the age of 18 years. The sub-sectors include:

- Early childhood education and care
- School age education and care
- Outside school hours care, and
- Education support.

The early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector is large, diverse and growing. Almost every family that lives in Australia will have had, or in the future will have, some interaction with the sector. As at 31 December 2017, there were 15,628 education and care services approved to operate under the National Quality Framework in Australia[1]. The National Quality Framework (NQF) is overseen nationally by Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACEQA). A key feature of the framework is the assessment and ranking of services against the National Quality Standards.

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[1] Mitchell Institute 2017ACECQA, *State of Early Learning in Australia 2017NQF Snapshot Q4 2017*

Table 1: Number of services approved under the National Quality Framework, by service sub-type and jurisdiction

State	Family Day Care	Long-Day Care	Preschool/ Kindergarten *	Outside School Hours Care	Other	Total
ACT	13	145	95	101	0	354
NSW	270	2,973	798	1325	0	5,366
NT	5	85	75	56	2	223
QLD	128	1,501	514	755	2	2,900
SA	18	372	398	374	0	1,162
TAS	14	123	0	96	0	233
VIC	347	1,457	1,205	1,224	0	4,233
WA	40	644	23	448	2	1,157
TOTAL	835	7,300	3,108	4,379	6	15,628

Source: Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, *NQF Snapshot Q4 2017*

*All preschools/kindergartens in Tasmania and most preschools/kindergartens in Western Australia are outside of the scope of the NQF, as are other types of services nationally, such as occasional care services and Budget-based Funded Services

#This data is related to approvals and could see LDC & OSHC service types under the one approval; therefore not depicting a true picture of the number of individual service types. An example of this is Tasmania within the Early Childhood and Child Care Summary (March 2016) – Department of Education and Training - actually total 391 services.

Early childhood educators support the social, emotional, physical and educational needs of infants and young children in various early childhood settings. They work in a variety of environments, including:

- *Long-Day Care:* This service provides education and care for children usually aged from birth-5 years
- *Family Day Care:* An increasingly popular service, especially within regional areas, through which flexible education and developmental activities for other people's children is provided in an approved family day care educator's home
- *Outside School Hours Care:* Encompassing before and after school care, and vacation care, this service provides education and care for school-aged children
- *Preschools/Kindergartens:* These services generally cater to children 3-5 years of age.

There are significant variations across Australia for ages across jurisdictions.

Services can operate under a number of different ownership/management types, including private operators, community and non-profit organisations, state/territory and local government, and public, independent and private schools.

EXTRACT from Annual Performance Reporting National Partnership Agreement, December 2017

As at 30 June 2017:

- more than 15,500 education and care services were approved to operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF), including:
    - 7166 long day care services (46% of approved services)
    - 4370 outside school hours care services (28%)
    - 3118 preschools/kindergartens (20%)
    - 885 family day care services (6%).
- more than 7000 providers were approved to operate education and care services, with 83% of these approved to operate a single education and care service
- the 10 largest providers in the country each operate more than 100 education and care services, for a combined total of more than 3000 services
- 'Private for profit' providers operate three quarters of approved family day care services, almost two thirds of approved long day care services and almost half of approved outside school hours care services
- half of approved preschools/kindergartens are operated by 'Private not for profit community managed' providers, with approaching a quarter being 'State/ Territory and Local Government managed'
- more than 14,000 education and care services had a published quality rating against the National Quality Standard, of which more than 10,000 (73% of quality rated services) met all 58 elements of quality.

It is estimated that there are more than 200,000 staff employed in education and care services, with around 900,000 families accessing education and care services for around 1.3 million children, of which approximately:

- 700,000 children attend long day care services
- 400,000 children attend outside school hours care services
- 200,000 children attend family day care services.[1]

On average, children attend long day care and family day care services for around 30 hours per week, while children attend outside school hours care services for around 12 hours per week.

Collectively, preschools/kindergartens, long day care services and outside school hours care services are referred to as centre-based care services. In total, there were 14,661 NQF-approved centre-based services as at 30 June 2017.

Preschools in Tasmania, and most preschools in Western Australia, are outside of the scope of the NQF, as are other types of services nationally, such as occasional care services and Budget Based Funded services.

1. Data on the education and care sector has been drawn from the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS) and the *Early Childhood and Child Care in Summary*, December quarter 2016.

The Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools through Early Childhood Interventions - *Lifting Our Game* - includes a section providing a summary of the background to early childhood education in Australia and the responsibilities of the Commonwealth, states and territories. Reforms agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) have led to significant changes in the last decade. However, there is still a separation of functions which can make the system difficult to navigate and ongoing reforms quite complex.[2]

The Australian government's roles and responsibilities for ECEC include:

- paying Child Care Benefit (CCB) to eligible families using approved services or registered carers
- paying Child Care Rebate (CCR) to eligible families using approved services
- providing funding to state and territory governments through the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE) to support the achievement of universal access to early childhood education
- providing funding and support to implement the National Quality Framework (NQF) through the National Partnership Agreement on the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care (NP NQAECEC)
- funding organisations to provide information, support and training to service providers
- providing operational and capital funding to some providers[3].

State and territory governments' roles and responsibilities vary across jurisdictions. Generally, state and territory governments are responsible for funding and/or providing preschool/kindergarten services. They may solely fund some ECEC services or contribute to services in receipt of Australian government funding. They approve ECEC services to operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF). State and territory governments are responsible for regulating services under the NQF, and their roles and responsibilities can include:

- providing a legislative framework in which services not approved under the NQF are licensed or registered to provide selected services
- monitoring and assessing the quality of approved NQF services in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
- monitoring approved NQF service providers
- delivering services directly (especially preschool/kindergarten services)
- providing information, support, training and development opportunities to educators, services and providers
- planning to ensure the appropriate mix of services is available to meet the needs of the community
- providing information and advice to families and others about operating standards and the availability of services
- providing dispute resolution and complaints management processes[4].

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[2] Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools through Early Childhood Interventions Accessed from 03/2017 https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/whats-happening-in-the-early-childhood-education-sector/lifting-our-game-report
[3] Australian Government 2017, *Productivity Commission, Early Childhood Education and Care*
[4] Australian Government 2017, *Productivity Commission, Early Childhood Education and Care*

The historic separation of "education-focused" and "care-focused" services for young children has contributed to the structure of responsibilities in place.[5]

Children's Education and Care Qualifications

The VET qualifications that cater to this sector are:

- CHC30113 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care
- CHC30213 Certificate III in Education Support
- CHC40113 Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care
- CHC40213 Certificate IV in Education Support
- CHC50113 Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care
- CHC50213 Diploma of School Age Education and Care

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) Scope of Registration

Table 1 indicates the number of Registered Training Providers (RTOs) with Children's Education and Care qualifications on scope. This data is current as at 6 April 2018, per the listing on the National Register of VET (www.training.gov.au). It is important to note that although any given RTO may have a qualification on its scope of delivery, it may not be delivering any nationally recognised training for that qualification. As a result, the data below may not be a true reflection of the extent of delivery.
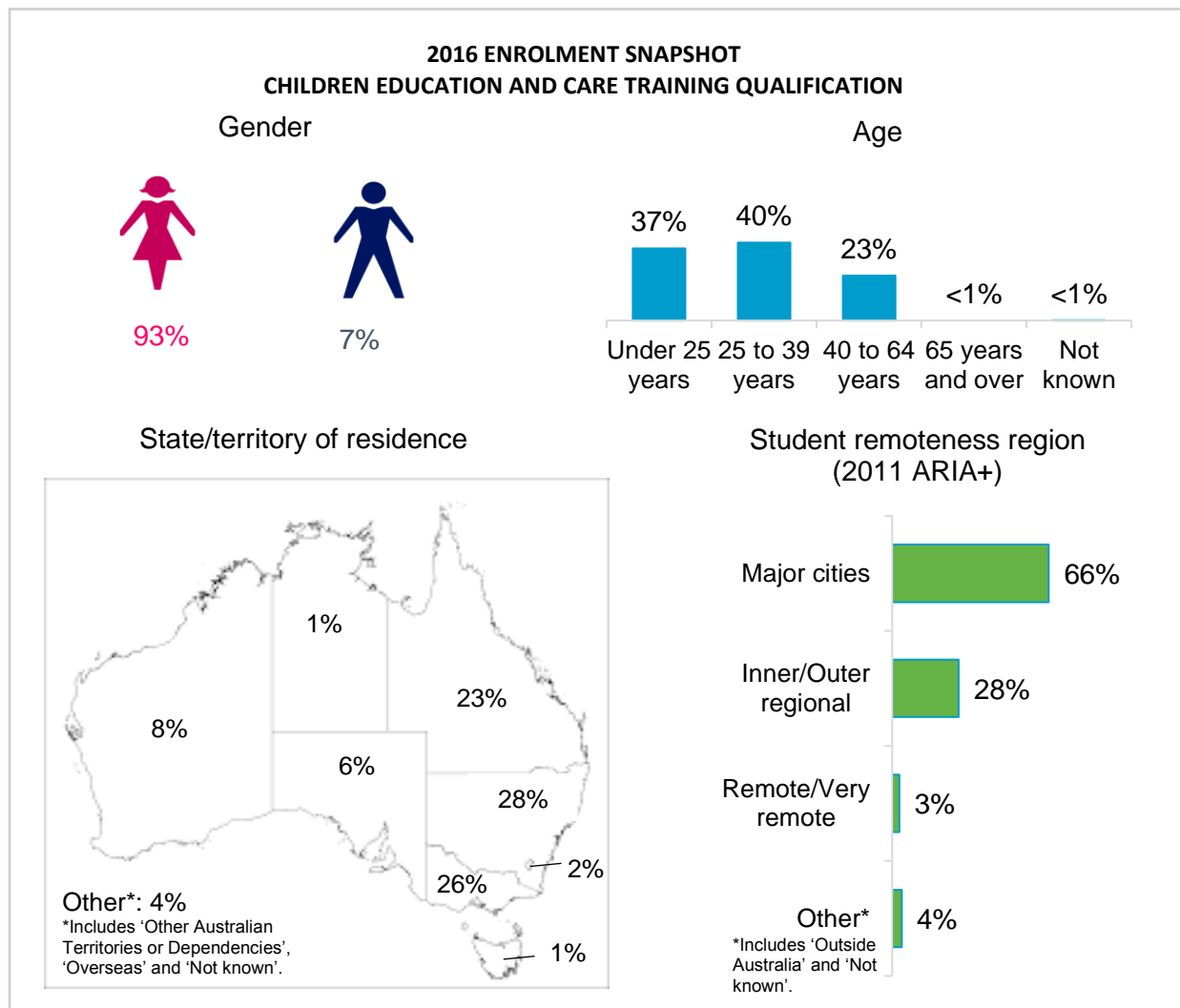
Table 1

Code	Qualification name	No of RTOs with qualification on scope
CHC30113	Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	478
CHC30213	Certificate III in Education Support	143
CHC40113	Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care	51
CHC40213	Certificate IV in Education Support	82
CHC50113	Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care	447
CHC50213	Diploma of School Age Education and Care	49

Source: Training.gov.au. RTOs approved to deliver this qualification. Accessed 6 April 2018

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[5] Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools through Early Childhood Interventions Accessed from 03/2017, section 2.2, https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/whats-happening-in-the-early-childhood-education-sector/lifting-our-game-report

Qualification Enrolments and Completions

2016 ENROLMENT SNAPSHOT
CHILDREN EDUCATION AND CARE TRAINING QUALIFICATION

Gender

93%   7%

Age

Under 25 years	25 to 39 years	40 to 64 years	65 years and over	Not known
37%	40%	23%	<1%	<1%

State/territory of residence

1%
8%
6%
23%
28%
26%
2%
1%

Other*: 4%
*Includes 'Other Australian Territories or Dependencies', 'Overseas' and 'Not known'.

Student remoteness region (2011 ARIA+)

Major cities	66%
Inner/Outer regional	28%
Remote/Very remote	3%
Other*	4%

*Includes 'Outside Australia' and 'Not known'.

General notes on statistics used in the 2016 Enrolment snapshot and Table 2

1. Enrolment and completion data is sourced from NCVER VOCSTATS (program enrolments and completions 2014–2016), accessed October 2017.
2. The increase in enrolments and completions between 2014 and 2016 are due in part to the inclusion of private providers in 2015.
3. Not all training providers are currently required to submit enrolment and completion data, and therefore some figures presented may under-represent the true count of enrolments and completions for a qualification. From 2018, all training providers will be required to submit data. Current discrepancies noted in the national NCVER figures versus actual attendance should therefore be minimal in future releases. The data presented in this report is shown for indicative purposes.
4. Figures reflect both public and private RTO data.
5. 'E' represents Enrolment.
6. 'C' represents Completion.
7. Completion data for 2016 represents preliminary outcomes (i.e. not a full year).
8. Superseded qualifications and their respective enrolment and completion data are not tabled.

Children's Education and Care Qualifications - Enrolments and Completions 2014 - 2016

Table 2

Qualification	E/C	2014	2015	2016	Total
CHC30113 - Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care	E	34,184	51,951	54,269	140,404
	C	5,498	15,053	14,887	35,438
CHC30213 - Certificate III in Education Support	E	8,302	16,067	17,817	42,186
	C	1,468	3,947	4,768	10,183
CHC40113 - Certificate IV in School Age Education and Care	E	336	704	436	1,476
	C	64	346	146	556
CHC40213 - Certificate IV in Education Support	E	1,763	4,064	6,134	11,961
	C	472	1,694	2,259	4,425
CHC50113 - Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care	E	34,902	67,394	74,997	177,293
	C	1,682	8,579	15,047	25,308
CHC50213 - Diploma of School Age Education and Care	E	207	571	847	1,625
	C	5	76	182	263

National Peak Bodies and Key Industry Players

The list below represents a range of organisations that perform a variety of key roles in this sector. These organisations and their networks are well placed to offer industry insights at the time of training package updates. Industry engagement will include a broad and inclusive range of stakeholders beyond those included in this list as relevant to the nature of training package product updates.

- **Peak and industry associations:**
  - Australian Childcare Alliance
  - Australian Community Children's Services
  - Australian Teacher Aide
  - Australian Tutoring Association
  - Community Early Learning Australia
  - Early Childhood Australia
  - Early Learning and Care Council of Australia
  - Family Day Care Australia
  - National Outside School Hours Care Association
  - Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care
- **Employee associations:**
  - United Voice
  - Australian Education Union
  - Australian Services Union
- **State and territory government departments:**
  - Department of Education (NSW)
  - Department of Education and Training (Victoria)
  - Department of Education and Training (Queensland)
  - Department of Education (Northern Territory)
  - Department for Education and Child Development (South Australia)
  - Department of Education (Western Australia)
  - Education Directorate (Australian Capital Territory)
  - Department of Education (Tasmania)
- **National authority:**
  - Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
- **Registered training organisations, both public and private**
- **Large, medium and small employers across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote areas**

Child Care Package Reform

Child care funding has undergone some reform in the last couple of years. In March 2017, the Australian Parliament passed the Jobs for Families Child Care Package. This legislation gives effect to the most significant reform to the early childhood education and care system in decades and will better target those parents or care givers who want to work or to work longer hours. It will give around one million Australian families relief from out-of-pocket child care cost pressures and provide more children with the opportunity to benefit from early education[6].

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[6] Australian Government 2017, mychild.gov.au https://www.mychild.gov.au/news/child-care-reforms-pass-parliament

The new Child Care Subsidy will be the main way in which the government will assist families with their child care fees. When the Child Care Subsidy commences on 2 July 2018, it will:

- replace the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) with a single, means-tested subsidy
- be paid directly to child care providers to be passed on to families
- be simpler than the current multi-payment system[7].

The sector is sensitive to changes in government policies and funding. The move to the Child Care Subsidy will have an impact, the extent of which is currently unknown. There are concerns which have been expressed about the impact of the activity test and other aspects on low and middle income families. [8]

Funding

Total Australian, state and territory government capital expenditure on ECEC services was $9.1 billion in 2015-16, compared with $8.8 billion in 2014-15. Federal government expenditure (all child care) accounted for $7.4 billion (82.1%) and state and territory government expenditure accounted for $1.6 billion, with preschools accounting for 83% of this expenditure[9].

The sector is expected to generate revenue of $12.4 billion in 2016-17, up 12% on the previous year due to higher fees and strong growth in government funding. Sector revenue is forecast to grow at an annualised 5.8% over the five years through 2021-22, to total $16.4 billion[10].

Workforce Challenges

A competent workforce is essential to the provision of high quality early childhood education and care, aimed at achieving the best outcomes for children and their families. Programs delivered by qualified educators are particularly effective in improving outcomes for vulnerable children[11]. There is increasing recognition that the work of caring for and educating young children is complex and requires sophisticated qualifications and ongoing professional development. There are also personal attributes which contribute to how effectively educators work with children and young people.

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[7] Australian Government 2017, Department of Education and Training, https://www.education.gov.au/child-care-subsidy-0
[8] https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/childcare-changes-more-likely-to-hit-low-to-middle-income-families-20180211-p4yzyb.html;
Doyle, J, Mar 24 2017, 'Government defends childcare package as sector says it's been let down', ABC news,
http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-24/federal-government-celebrates-childcare-win-but-sector-let-down/8383550
[9] Australian Government 2017, Productivity Commission, Report on Government Services 2017, Chapter 3 *Early childhood education and care*
[10] IBIS World 2017, Q8710 *Child care Services in Australia Industry Report*
[11] J Watson and L Tully, *Prevention and Early Intervention Update—Trends in Recent Research*, NSW Centre for Parenting and Research, 2008

The ECEC workforce has grown in recent years to meet rising demand, with ongoing efforts to:

- further expand the workforce to meet the growing demand
- increase the proportion of staff who have, or are working towards, a relevant ECEC qualification;
- further develop regional and remote workforce capability
- support the abilities of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in remote communities to deliver the services their communities need
- increase the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds across the workforce
- facilitate ongoing professional development to embed a culture of professional practice inclusive of current pedagogy, learning and teaching experiences, and leadership of all areas of education and care provision
- encourage ECEC staff to work together with the broader Early Childhood Development (ECD) workforce, including across health and family support services[12].

To attract and retain suitably qualified educators, governments are working with the sector to improve the professional status of these roles. The NQF supports this via improved and nationally consistent qualification requirements. Issues such as lower pay and conditions compared to other sectors are recognised as affecting professional status and staff retention.

To develop a sustainable ECEC workforce of service providers, it's essential that early childhood educators, peak bodies (including unions), the federal, state, territory and local governments, as well as training providers, families and communities, join together to ensure they drive the necessary change. Changes that will ensure success include developing a workforce which is not only increasing in size but becoming both more professional and more qualified, as well as becoming more collaborative and more responsive to the needs of its stakeholders.

Employers in the sector must also be actively involved in changes. Industry reports that qualified applicants are regularly not able to meet the requirements of their work roles and that the attraction and retention of good staff can be challenging.

This may be exacerbated when the changes to the Child Care Subsidy are implemented in July 2018. The impact of how the capped hourly rate translates to the number of hours in a service's fee structure will have a flow on effect to models of employment. For example increases in sessional care are likely to result in an increased need for flexible part time and casual employment arrangements.

ECEC is recognised as a profession that requires strong and broad relationship-building skills and specialist skills and knowledge to support children's development and learning. Quality professional development job role learning opportunities in ECEC settings are critical to ensuring skills remain up-to-date and relevant to the workplace environment. The concept of professionalism in the ECEC workforce is incorporated into the NQF through references to capability, leadership, teaching and learning. Enhancing the public perception of the profession will assist in attracting and retaining a

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[12] Education Council 2012, *Early Years Workforce Strategy – The Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Strategy for Australia 2012 -2016*

skilled ECEC workforce. Building a career pathway is a key step in raising professionalism. The articulation of qualification pathways and professional learning expectations offers opportunities for improved professionalisation and ultimately an improvement in the quality of education of the ECEC workforce, as well as the quality of the education and care of children.

Rising birth rates and female workforce participation have led to a higher demand for ECEC services and consequently for ECEC educators. This trend is expected to continue. The implementation of the NQF and the national commitment to universal access to early childhood education have also increased the demand for qualified ECEC educators, particularly in preschool and long-day care settings. It is also important that educators have the relevant cultural competencies in inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of children.

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) is a recognised growth sector, resulting in a need for greater numbers of skilled staff. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census [13] contains statistics which show that the largest increases in ECEC workforce size between 2013 and 2016 data collections were for Family day care: up 131.8%, Outside school hours care :up 52%, Vacation care:up 49.7%, Long day care: up43.5%

Regional and remote communities have a greater challenge in attracting and retaining staff who hold a range of appropriate qualifications. Limited access to learning for higher level qualifications and professional development prevents growth towards a sustainable workforce. There are also broader issues ranging from a higher cost of living to housing shortages. Attracting and developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ECEC educators, particularly in remote communities and in locations with significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, will have significant benefits for the ECEC sector and these communities.

Well-trained and qualified ECEC educators with the relevant knowledge, skills and attributes are essential to quality outcomes for children. Research indicates the benefits of highly qualified staff working closely beside children in promoting optimal outcomes for their development and wellbeing. The NQF sets out minimum qualification standards. In addition, a focus on educational leadership (in contrast to leadership in other things) is promoted by the NQS.

All Early Childhood Education and Care qualification content, from Certificate IIIs to Masters degrees, needs to embed the NQF and ECA Code of Ethics as underpinning knowledge for professional practice as an educator. Applied learning provides the practical experience for implementing both on a daily basis.

Professional development must continue post-qualification to support the embedding of learning and to keep abreast of evidence-based theory and practice.

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[13] 2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census, published September 2017, prepared by the Social Research Centre

A key element of ensuring better outcomes for children, their families and the community is through providing high quality, culturally appropriate and inclusive ECEC services. Research indicates that high quality education and care is particularly effective in improving outcomes for vulnerable children[14]. Australian society is becoming increasingly diverse, and ECEC services and educators must respond to this. A responsive workforce needs to:

- confidently identify and support the diverse needs of children
- further develop skills that address the needs of the diverse range of children it is working with, such as those:
  - from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
  - with a disability, including children with high support needs
  - from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds
  - from a refugee or humanitarian intervention background
  - who are vulnerable
  - who may be disadvantaged, and
- work with families to support and assist them in creating strong learning environments[15].

The Australian government has committed $5.9 million from 2017-18 to 2020-21 to trial a series of applications ('apps') to be used in preschools to improve English literacy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children for whom English is not a first language[16].

ECEC is a part of the broader early childhood development (ECD) workforce, and enhancing the skills of ECEC educators to work effectively with other ECD professionals represents a significant step towards better integration of early childhood services. Integration of ECD services in the early childhood sector covers a wide range of professionals working with children and families, including child and family health services, social workers, family support workers, child protection officers, speech therapists and physiotherapists. Better integration of service delivery supports the accessibility and responsiveness of services to better meet the needs of families[17]. It is important therefore for ECEC workers to have the skills and confidence to be able to interact with other ECD professionals for the benefit of the children under their care.

Working Conditions

Recruitment and retention of early childhood teachers continues to challenge the sector with both long-day care services and preschools competing with schools for teachers. With preschools and schools typically offering higher salaries, shorter and consistent hours, more leave, and improving professional status, many ECEC teachers choose not to remain in long-day care due to low rates of pay, hours and conditions, low professional status, and the stressful and physically demanding nature of the work itself.[18]

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[14] Torii, K, Fox, D, *'Quality is key in Early Childhood Education in Australia'*, Mitchell Institute Paper no 1/2017.

[15] Education Council 2012, *Early Years Workforce Strategy – The Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Strategy for Australia 2012 -2016*

[16] Australian Government, Department of Education and training, English Language Learning for Indigenous Children (ELLIC), https://www.education.gov.au/english-language-learning-indigenous-children-ellic Page last updated 12 May 2017

[17] Education Council 2012, *Early Years Workforce Strategy – The Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce Strategy for Australia 2012 -2016*

[18] McKinlay, S, Queensland University of Technology, Faculty of Education, *Building a sustainable workforce in early childhood education and care: what keeps Australian early childhood teachers working in Long Day Care?* 2016

The recent *Lifting our Game* report commissioned by COAG made the following recommendations:

> "Australian governments [should] agree to a new national early childhood education and care workforce strategy to support the recruitment, retention, sustainability and enhanced professionalization of the workforce, thereby improving service quality and children's outcomes."[19]

The report finds that quality early childhood education makes a significant contribution to achieving educational excellence in schools.More broadly the report refers to the importance of the early years in respect to how a child's environment and experiences in his or her early years set key pathways for life.

Quality in Service

Investing in early learning is a widely accepted approach, backed by extensive evidence, for governments and families to foster children's development, lay the foundations for future learning and wellbeing, and reduce downstream expenditure on health, welfare and justice[20]. Quality in early education has many components, but to lift children's educational outcomes, educators who can skilfully combine the explicit teaching of skills and concepts with sensitive and warm, play-based interactions are critical. Close, ongoing relationships between children and their educators are crucial to social and emotional learning, something which relies on attracting and retaining excellent educators.[21]

There are a number of organisational and structural foundations that need to be in place to enable educators to do this important work effectively. Australia successfully established these structures through the introduction of the NQF in 2012, which has progressively improved some of the critical elements of quality - including increased educator qualification requirements, improved educator-to-child ratios, and the establishment of a nationally consistent National Quality Standard.

Available evidence suggests that in key areas of early education, Australia's ECEC system is not yet providing enough children with educational experiences of sufficient quality to shift their developmental trajectories, particularly in the case of children experiencing disadvantage[22]. It is taking time for the impact of the 2012 NQF reforms to flow through to everyday practice. The ongoing assessment of ECEC services against key quality standards has demonstrated that there is still a need for further progress to be made.

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[19] https://www.education.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1159357/Lifting-Our-Game-Final-Report.pdf

[20] NSW Government 2017, NSW Department of Education, Early Start Research Institute, University of Wollongong, Siraj, I., Kingston, D., Neilsen-Hewett, C., Howard, S., Melhuish, E., de Rosnay, M., . . . Luu, B. (2017). *Fostering Effective Early Learning Study*

[21] Cassidy, D. J., Lower, J. K., Kintner-Duffy, V. L., Hegde, A. V., & Shim, J. (2011) 'The day-to-day reality of teacher turnover in preschool classrooms: An analysis of classroom context and teacher, director, and parent perspectives', Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 25(1), pp.1-23; Whitebook, M., & Sakai, L. (2003) 'Turnover begets turnover: An examination of job and occupational instability among child care center staff', *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 18, pp. 273-293; Whitebook, M., & L. Sakai (2004) *By a thread: How centers hold on to teachers, how teachers build lasting careers*. Kalamazoo, MI: UPJohn Institute for Employment Research.

[22] Torii, K, Fox, D, *'Quality is key in Early Childhood Education in Australia'*, Mitchell Institute Paper no 1/2017.

Quality learning, teaching and assessment provision by registered training providers and higher education providers is strongly linked to quality in the provision of education and care by students. Other issues concern course duration, vocational placement and host employer relationships. These concerns may impact the capabilities of students at the end of their training. Workplaces are also lacking the knowledge and support in their responsibilities of on-the-job training and mentoring/coaching skills.

Job role definition continues to be diverse across jurisdictions and across qualifications. For early childhood a division between care and education continues. For Education Support graduates the demands of general education support, administration and specialist assistance with children with disabilities continue to add complexity to training package design. Training package products need to align with job roles in the sector, and current work is highlighting where qualification structures can be strengthened. The consultation process in updating training package materials is useful in identifying broader issues and working with stakeholders, including regulators, to identify and articulate these.

The following are a set of challenges for the ECEC sector if the potential of early learning to positively impact children's further learning and development is to be fully realised:

- **Complexities of a mixed market**: finding solutions that work across diverse settings (family day care, stand-alone kindergartens or preschools, long-day care centres and OSHC), management types (government-run, not-for-profit and private for-profit services), and scale (single centres to large national chains).
- **Current funding mechanisms are not aligned to need or opportunity for impact**: children with the greatest level of need and the most to gain from high quality early education often require additional resources. Yet loadings for disadvantaged students – the core underlying concept of needs-based funding models accepted in other sectors – are not consistently applied to ECEC. Children also have no entitlement to attend ECEC programs, contrary to the way they do for primary through secondary school. Families currently access ECEC programs in a demand-side market that does not always meet the needs of vulnerable families. The high cost of ECEC is a barrier for many low income families.
- **Low wages and difficult working conditions**: long hours, low pay and low levels of recognition for their work in the ECEC sector are barriers to enabling or motivating many educators to invest additional time and resources in upskilling[23]. Current rates of remuneration make it difficult to retain highly qualified staff. A recent Australian study found that 1 in 5 educators plan to leave their job within twelve months due to the "extreme financial hardship" staying in the sector entails.[24] Reasons for low pay in the early childhood sector include a high proportion of female workers, the dependency of educators on modern awards that set minimum standards of pay and conditions, and various funding models that operate in the sector.[25]

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[23] Irvine, S., Thorpe, K., McDonald, P., Lunn, J., & Sumsion, J. (2016). *Money, Love and Identity: Initial Findings from the National ECEC Workforce Study*.

[24] Irvine, S., K. Thorpe, P. McDonald, J. Lunn, and J. Sumsion (2016) *Money, Love and Identity: Initial findings from the National ECEC Workforce Study*, Summary report from the national ECEC Workforce Development Policy Workshop, Brisbane, Queensland: QUT, p. 5.

[25] Irvine, S., K. Thorpe, P. McDonald, https://theconversation.com/low-paid-womens-work-why-early-childhood-educators-are-walking-out-91402, 23 March 2018

- **Staff turnover:** as a consequence of low pay and difficult working conditions, staff turnover also acts as a disincentive to employers in the sector investing in training.

- **Coordinating pre-service education and training programs**: there is currently no effective mechanism to ensure that all early childhood courses (both university and VET-based) equip pre-service educators with the skills needed to produce effective teacher-child interactions in early learning[26].

It is clear that quality in early learning is driven by educators who can provide effective learning opportunities and emotionally supportive interactions with children. To lift quality across the system, supports that strengthen early childhood educator capability must be a core focus.

Child Safety and Wellbeing

The safety and wellbeing of all children is critical for their optimal development. Examples of concerns that put this at risk include family violence, child abuse and neglect, discrimination and trauma.

There is a need for workers within ECEC to and have the training, procedural framework and confidence to take the appropriate next steps.
Due to the close relationships between ECEC workers and children in their care, these workers are often in a position to be alerted to and recognise the signs of threats to children's safety and wellbeing. It is critical that appropriate policies, procedures and training support people in how these matters are addressed.

Family Violence

Although much has been done to improve our understanding of the extent to which family violence is occurring in our community, a great deal of the violence remains hidden. This is largely because many people, and some victims, do not recognise that what is happening is in fact family violence; others choose not to report it, or are unable to; and sometimes incidents are not recorded as family violence or are not recorded at all.

Children experience family violence as direct victims or through witnessing it in the home, and as adolescents they can also experience violence in intimate relationships. Family violence has severe short- and long-term effects on children and young people. It can sometimes result in behavioural and mental health problems, disrupted schooling, homelessness, poverty, and intergenerational family violence[27].

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[26] Torii, K, Fox, D, *'Quality is key in Early Childhood Education in Australia'*, Mitchell Institute Paper no 1/2017.
[27] Victorian State Government 2016, Royal Commission into Family Violence, *Summary and recommendations*

Child Protection

All jurisdictions, with the exception of the Northern Territory, currently have a policy or strategy for reforming their systems for protecting children. There are a number of developments designed to strengthen control of how systems for protecting children operate and to ensure that organisations and services adhere to high quality standards. Child-safe standards and guidelines for organisations providing direct care and support to children, and for individuals working with children (including carers), are apparent in several states. The Commonwealth government has also developed national Out-of-Home Care (OOHC) standards, which are made up of six high-level outcomes or goals for protecting Australia's children, as follows:

- Diverting children from statutory child protection
- Reducing re-reporting to statutory child protection
- Increasing exits from OOHC
- Reducing the number of children in OOHC
- Improving outcomes for children in OOHC and post-care, and
- Reducing the over-representation of Aboriginal children in the statutory child protection system[28].

These goals can be achieved through:

- better use of evidence, and building the evidence of effective programs and interventions
- enhanced analytics capacity
- the use of big data and actuarial calculations to derive evidence and insights about where to target interventions
- sharing responsibility across organisations and government departments
- greater use of client-directed and other devolved approaches
- strengthened processes for continuous improvement
- improving workforce capability and cultural competence, and
- enhancing prevention and early intervention efforts.

Child-safe standards and guidelines for organisations providing direct care and support to children and for individuals working with children (including carers) are apparent in several states. The Commonwealth government has also developed national OOHC standards, which the Australian Capital Territory has adopted. New South Wales has developed its own quality assurance framework for OOHC, and Tasmania has a quality and regulatory framework for OOHC in development. It has been noted that the available resources share many common features, such as a focus on leadership, governance and culture; involving families and the community; proactively engaging with staff and volunteers; encouraging empowerment of children; and creating child-friendly complaint processes. [29]

[28] Australian Government 2017, Australian Institute of Family Studies, *Developments to strengthen systems for child protection across Australia*, CFCA Paper NO. 44

[29] ACEQA Children's Health and Safety, Occasional Paper 2 June 2016, p12
https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/acecqa/files/Reports/OccasionalPaper2-ChildrensHealthandSafety_2.pdf

Universal services that work with children and young people—for example, maternal and child health services, early childhood services, schools and health service providers—often lack the knowledge and expertise to identify and respond when children and young people are experiencing family violence. With this intersection of services there is a role for collaborative partnerships to help find appropriate solutions for children and families.

The overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Out of Home Care is a significant concern. SNAICC has called for expanding *Closing the Gap* targets to address the over-representation of children in out-of-home care by 2040, and for sub-targets that address the underlying causes of child protection intervention.[30]

Family Violence and diverse needs

The experiences of people from diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people living in rural, regional and remote communities, older people, people who are part of culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people who experience family violence, are at a higher risk of family violence within Australian society.

Diverse groups face a range of factors which can act as obstacles in seeking help in regard to family violence[31]. Lack of access to agencies, or distrust of agencies established to assist, are examples of some of the more complex factors, aside from communication barriers and awareness. Understanding these factors and being able to use reflection in identifying the reasons for personal attitudes and the potential obstacles for children and families in seeking help are significant in the ECEC roles. How roles and responsibilities are defined in the context of policies, procedures and training is also critical in ensuring that appropriate assistance is provided. Access to current research and resources is useful in the growing perspectives to the issues in the prevention of family violence.[32]

Raising the level of awareness and understanding of the complexity of family violence within Australian society generally is a necessary part of addressing it's prevention.[33]

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[30] Sharron WIlliams, SNAICC Chairperson, http://www.snaicc.org.au/media-release-15-march-2018-voices-must-lead-next-phase-closing-gap/

[31] Victorian State Government 2016, Royal Commission into Family Violence, *Summary and recommendations, also* Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Volume 6 Making Institutions child safe, Creating child safe communities through prevention, recommendation 6.3 https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/final_report_-_recommendations.pdf

[32] See for example the Our Watch website (End Violence Against Women and Their Children) https://www.ourwatch.org.au/

[33] https://www.ourwatch.org.au/Preventing-Violence

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

The recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse refer directly to education and care settings as follows in Volume 6, Recommendation 6 .2

... initiatives in respect to raising awareness and knowledge of this [family violence] and related behaviours and attitudes with prevention education delivery through many settings including day care, preschool and school.[34]

… The national strategy to prevent child sexual abuse should encompass the following complementary initiatives:

prevention education for tertiary students studying university, technical and further education, and vocational education and training courses before entering child-related occupations. This should aim to increase awareness and understanding of the prevention of child sexual abuse and potentially harmful sexual behaviours in children

The current project in respect to the updating of the Children's Education and Care Training Package products is taking these recommendations into account as consultation progresses. Existing qualifications include a number of units, including imported units, which potentially accommodate these initiatives, however further consultation will be required to establish the need for more specific or explicit references in the relevant sections of training package products. For example the performance criteria or knowledge evidence in a unit of competency.
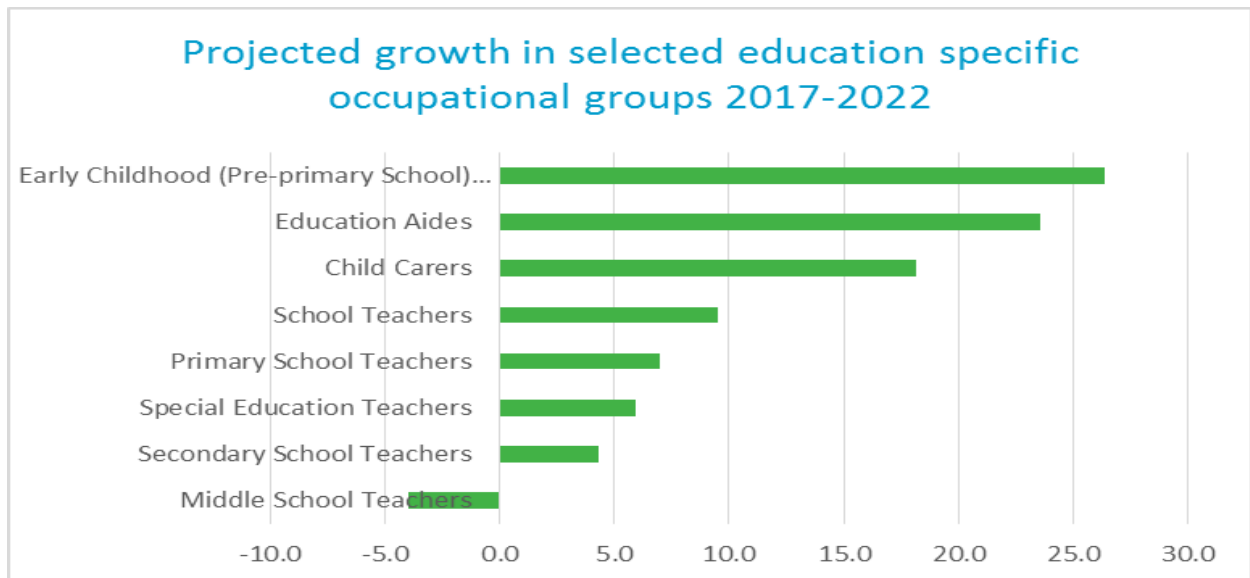
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[34] Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, Volume 6 Making Institutions child safe, Creating child safe communities through prevention, see for example recommendation 6.2

Employment Skills and Outlook

Labour force data

The figure below highlights that the number of workers in the ECEC sector is projected to grow by around 20% between 2017 and 2022. This is a much higher rate of growth than projected for the school teaching sector, which has a projected growth of only 5% in the next 5 years.

Projected growth in selected education specific occupational groups 2017-2022

Occupational Group	Growth
Early Childhood (Pre-primary School)...	~26
Education Aides	~23
Child Carers	~18
School Teachers	~9.5
Primary School Teachers	~7
Special Education Teachers	~6
Secondary School Teachers	~4
Middle School Teachers	~-3

Source: Australian Department of Employment, 2017 Occupational Projections – five years to November 2022

According to the Department of Education and Training (DET), in 2016 approximately 194,994 staff were employed in the ECEC sector. Long-day care services employed over half the ECEC workforce (55.7%). Family day care services were the next largest employer (16.7%) followed by outside school hours care (14.1%) and vacation care services (12.1%). In-home care (1.0%) and occasional care (0.5%) services were relatively small employers of the ECEC workforce.

DET data for 2016 shows that most of the ECEC workforce were employed in New South Wales (34.1%), Victoria (26%) and Queensland (20.4%) and this is as expected, as staffing levels for the workforce are likely to reflect the population distribution of Australia. Table 3 provides a full breakdown across the states and territories.

Table 3: Size of ECEC workforce in the ECEC National Workforce Census (a)
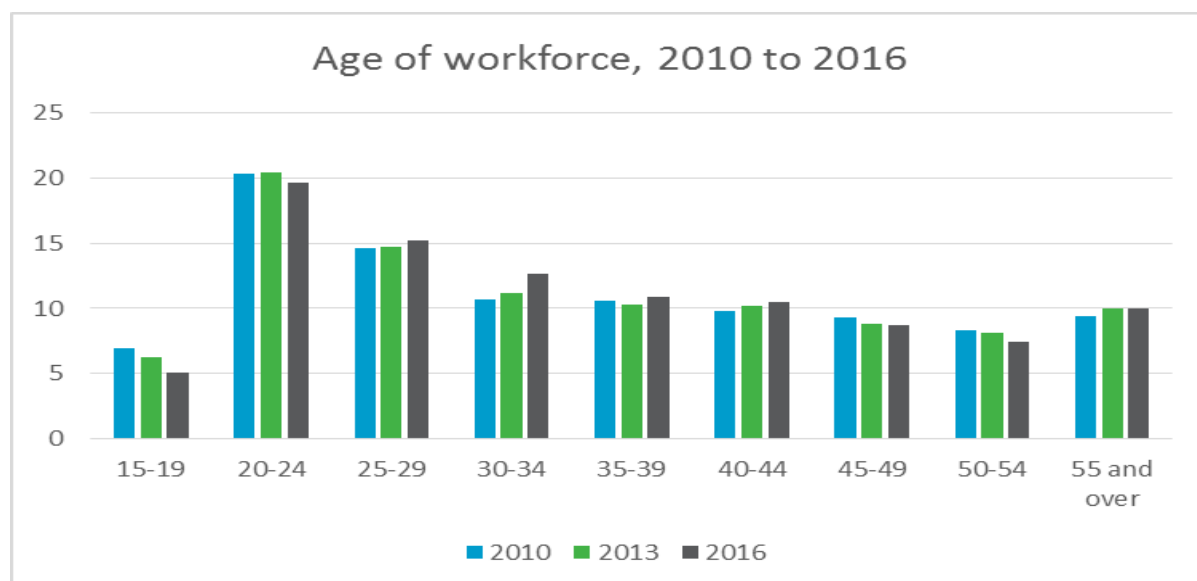
Table 3

State	Long-Day Care No.	Family Day Care No.	In-Home Care No.	Occasional Care No.	Outside School Hours Care No.	Vacation Care No.
NSW	37,393	11,732	650	356	9,004	7,270
Vic	26,747	12,315	410	364	6,311	4,528
Qld	23,766	4,720	537	44	5,283	5,409
SA	6,624	1,141	42	27	2,287	2,546
WA	7,915	1,840	185	107	2,334	2,192
Tas	1,924	479	71	25	756	582
NT	1,070	105	6	0	412	312
ACT	3,081	247	0	13	1,104	725
Total No.	108,521	32,580	1,901	936	27,491	23,563
Total %	55.7	16.7	1	0.5	0.5	14.1

(a) Totals may not equal sum of components due to rounding of weighted data.
Source: Department of Education and Training, 2016, The Social Research Centre, *2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census*

The age distribution of the ECEC workforce has remained unchanged between the 2010, 2013 and 2016 waves of the National Workforce Census. In 2016, one in eight (12.7%) of the sector's workers were aged 30-34 years old (up 1.5 percentage points since 2013) and 5.1% were aged 15-19 years old (down 1.2 percentage points)[35]. A full breakdown can be seen in the table 4.
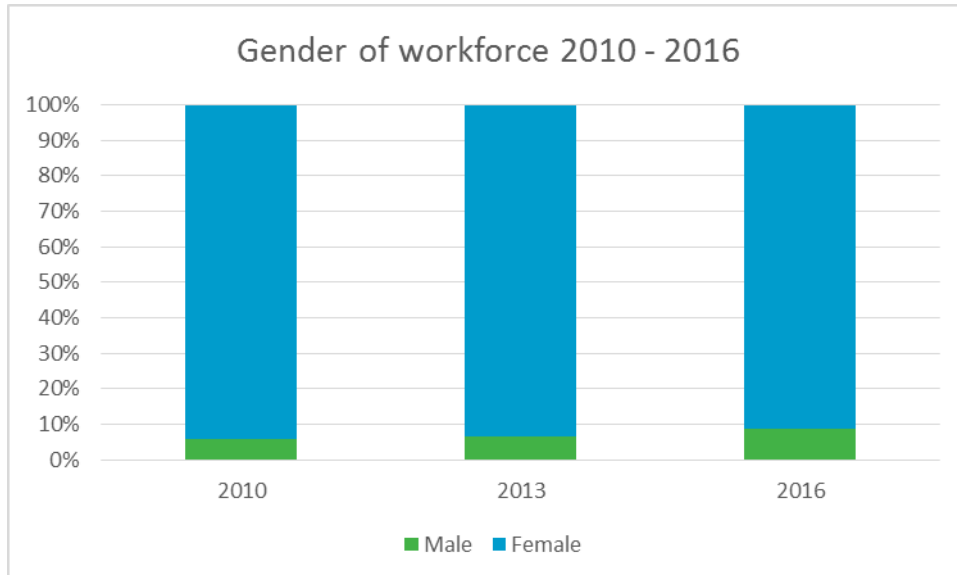
Table 4

Source: Department of Education and Training 2016, The Social Research Centre, *2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census*

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[35] Department of Education and Training 2016, The Social Research Centre, *2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census*

The proportion of males increased 2.5 percentage points between 2013 and 2016, from 6.4% to 8.9% (after increasing marginally between 2010 and 2013), while the proportion of Indigenous workers in the ECEC workforce increased marginally between 2013 and 2016.

Table 5

Gender of workforce 2010 - 2016

Source: Department of Education and Training 2016, The Social Research Centre, *2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census*

With regards to the qualification breakdown of staff within the ECEC sector, over four-fifths (85.2%) of paid contact staff in the ECEC workforce had an ECEC-related qualification – 38% had a Certificate III / IV, 34.1% had a Diploma or Advanced Diploma, and 11.9% had a bachelor's degree or above in an ECEC-related field. Almost all paid contact staff in occasional care (95%), family day care (93.2%) and long-day care (91.8%) services had an ECEC-related qualification. Paid contact staff were most likely qualified at the Certificate III / IV level in family day care services (54.3%) and the Diploma / Advanced Diploma level in occasional care services (47.5%).

Table 6

Table 6: Highest level of ECEC-related qualifications of paid contact staff by service type (a) (b)

Level of Qualification	Long-Day Care	Family Day Care	In-Home Care	Occasional Care	Outside School Hours Care	Vacation Care	Total
Bachelor's degree and above	12.9%	3.0%	8.9%	9.8%	14.0%	18.7%	11.9%
Advanced Diploma/Diploma	38.8%	34.6%	22.4%	47.5%	22.5%	21.4%	34.1%
Certificate III/IV	39.1%	54.3%	31.9%	35.8%	23.1%	21.9%	38.0%
Below Certificate III	1.0%	1.3%	3.0%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%	1.2%
Total staff with an ECEC-related qualification (c)	91.8%	93.2%	66.2%	95.0%	61.4%	63.7%	85.2%
Total staff without an ECEC-related qualification	8.2%	6.8%	33.8%	5.0%	38.6%	36.3%	14.8%

(a) Totals may not equal the sum of components due to rounding of weighted data.
(b) Table includes paid contact staff only (staff who are paid and doing primary or other contact work).
(c) ECEC-related qualifications include early childhood teaching, primary teaching, other teaching, child care, nursing (including Mothercraft nursing), other human welfare studies, behavioural science and other early childhood education and care-related qualifications.
Source: Department of Education and Training 2016, The Social Research Centre, *2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census*

There is evidence to show that staff working within the ECEC sector have begun to attain higher qualifications. Two-thirds (67.2%) of paid contact staff whose highest qualification was a Certificate I or II were 'upskilling'; that is, studying at a higher level (e.g. a Certificate III and above) – mostly a Certificate III. Over half (57.5%) of paid contact staff qualified in other certificates (e.g. below the Certificate I level) were studying at a higher level, and one quarter (26.9%) qualified at the Certificate III/IV level were studying at a higher level – mostly a Diploma or Advanced Diploma. Only 8.5% of qualified paid contact staff holding a Diploma or Advanced Diploma were studying at a higher level (i.e. bachelor's degree and above)[36].

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[36] Department of Education and Training 2016, The Social Research Centre, *2016 Early Childhood Education and Care National Workforce Census*

Future Skills Needs

Soft Skills

The term "Soft skills" commonly refer to interpersonal skills such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, emotional judgement, professional ethics and global citizenship. Occupations which have an intensive need for these skills have an annual growth rate of 1.6% which is predicted to grow 2.5 times faster to 2035 than occupations where soft skills are less prevalent (0.6%)[37]. The speed at which these occupations is growing is already impacting the composition of those roles. These occupations have grown from approximately half of all jobs in 2000 to nearly 60% of all jobs in 2015. While experiencing slower growth from 2015 to 2035, Deloitte Access Economics predicts that soft-skilled occupations will make up 63% of all jobs by 2030[38].

The importance of these skills is critical in the early childhood education and support workforce where skills for building positive relationships, communication and collaboration are fundamental to job roles. All jobs within ECEC have soft skill requirements, and the units of competency already in place in this area build credentials to support recognition and professionalism within the sector, as well as equipping workers with the necessary tools to fulfil their jobs to a satisfactory standard. These skills also act as a platform for some of the critical analysis skills which underpin the job roles in the sector.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, some of the characteristics possessed by effective early childhood educators include communication skills, a respect for differences, creativity and flexibility[39]. As the sector is expected to grow in the coming years it is vital that relevant training packages for ECEC include competencies regarding these skills. In regional and remote communities the role of children's education and care workers can be a critical component to social cohesion and community stability. These broader roles in community networks need to be considered in defining current and future skill needs as they may not be readily apparent, and need to be represented in decisions regarding qualifications and skills.

Reflective practice and the ability to recognise how theoretical learning and development frameworks relate to their own job role and translate into the tasks they are performing with children require the application of soft skills. They are also integral to supporting children's behavioural development and experience with forming positive relationships. The birth-to-2 age group and toddlers also have a particular emphasis on these skills. Generally within this sector no job role is task-based, as the interaction with children is integral and occurs at many levels, from the most private and personal of circumstances, such as nappy changes, to play.

Culturally respectful and responsive policies, processes and practices in the sector require cultural competence. These skills are increasingly important as the diversity of our societies continue to increase.

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[37] Deloitte Access Economics 2017, *Soft skills for business success, DeakinCo, May 2017*

[38] Deloitte Access Economics 2017, *Soft skills for business success, DeakinCo, May 2017*

[39] Mellinger, B.B, Houston Chronicle, 'Qualities of a Good Teacher in Early Childhood Development.'
http://work.chron.com/qualities-good-teacher-early-childhood-development-8694.html

Technology Skills

There is an increasing use of technology in the sector, including the use of digital communication tools with parents and digital documentation in routine activities. Computing skills and i-pad skills also encompass selecting appropriate apps for use with children. The integration of technology with play-based learning requires ongoing consideration of policies, procedures and skills. Technology skills relating to administration and business functions of services include budget tools, workforce development tools, roster systems and pay systems. The new subsidy system incorporates external digital reporting requirements, and the online use of data facilitates increasing use of analytics for reporting and information purposes.

Again, these units of competency are incorporated in existing Children's Education and Care qualifications in the training package. The current project incorporates updates to ensure the content of units of competency and qualifications continue to be aligned to the job roles in the sector.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Skills

Language, literacy and numeracy skills are underpinning skills for the competencies required in the job roles in all sectors. Stakeholders in the children's education and care sector vary in their views about how these skills are best addressed. For example, there are training providers who do incorporate processes to identify where students require support as part of their program and implement action in this regard. There are other training providers who report challenges in matching enrolment processes with student abilities, and these challenges are often created by broader factors – for example, online enrolment processes, and students motivated to enrol for reasons other than job outcomes. There are some reports from industry that there are frustrations with qualified workers who lack the skills to do the job.

Consideration of setting standards for these skills levels includes whether it is possible to agree on national standards and, if so, which standards and what methods and responsibility for administration apply. Concerns have been expressed about unintended consequences of implementing such a system, particularly in respect to regional and remote communities.

The sector remains committed to strengthening the Training Package Products wherever practicable to improve the consistency and quality in the outcomes. However, there is an equal commitment to the requirements of all segments of the industry and the critical role they play in communities. The current update of the Training Package Products includes consideration of the explicit references to foundation skills in the performance criteria and assessment requirements in units of competency as they relate to job functions. These skills cannot be considered in isolation.

In the current update of the Training Package Products, broader consideration is also being given to the structure of the qualifications, and strengthening the progression between the levels of qualifications to enhance skills development.

Generic Skills Ranking

Note: The 12 generic skills listed below, including the descriptors, were provided by the Department of Education and Training for ranking purposes. For the 2018 ranking exercise, an 'Other' generic skill option was included in the list to capture any additional key skills for an industry. Please note in this case, no other generic skills were identified.

1 COMMUNICATION / COLLABORATION / SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE — Ability to understand/apply principles of creating more value for customers and collaborative skills. Ability to critically assess and develop content with new media forms and persuasive communications. Ability to connect in a deep and direct way.

2 LANGUAGE, LITERACY & NUMERACY (LLN) — Foundation skills of literacy and numeracy.

3 MANAGERIAL / LEADERSHIP — Ability to effectively communicate with all functional areas in the organisation. Ability to represent and develop tasks and processes for desired outcomes. Ability to oversee processes, guide initiatives and steer employees toward achievement of goals.

4 DESIGN MINDSET/ THINKING CRITICALLY / SYSTEM THINKING / PROBLEM SOLVING — Ability to adapt products to rapidly shifting consumer tastes and trends. Ability to determine the deeper meaning or significance of what is being expressed via technology. Ability to understand how things that are regarded as systems influence one another within a complete entity, or larger system. Ability to think holistically.

5 LEARNING AGILITY / INFORMATION LITERACY / INTELLECTUAL AUTONOMY — Ability to identify a need for information. Ability to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use and cite the information. Ability to develop a working knowledge of new systems. Ability to work without direct leadership and independently.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL / SUSTAINABILITY — Ability to focus on problem solving and the development of applied solutions to environmental issues and resource pressures at local, national and international levels.

7 TECHNOLOGY AND APPLICATION — Ability to create/use of technical means, understand their interrelation with life, society, and the environment. Ability to understand/apply a scientific or industrial processes, inventions, methods. Ability to deal with mechanisation/ automation / computerisation.

8 DATA ANALYSIS — Ability to translate vast amounts of data into abstract concepts and understand data based reasoning. Ability to use data effectively to improve programs, processes and business outcomes. Ability to work with large amounts of data.

9 CUSTOMER SERVICE / MARKETING — Ability to interact with another human being, whether helping them find, choose or buy something. Ability to supply customers' wants and needs. Ability to manage online sales and marketing. Ability to understand and manage digital products.

10 STEM Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) — Sciences, mathematics and scientific literacy.

11 FINANCIAL — Ability to understand and apply core financial literacy concepts and metrics, streamlining processes such as budgeting, forecasting, and reporting, and stepping up compliance. Ability to manage costs and resources, and drive efficiency.

12 ENTREPRENEURIAL — Ability to take any idea and turn that concept into reality / make it a viable product and/or service. Ability to focus on the next step / closer to the ultimate goal. Ability to sell ideas, products or services to customers, investors or employees etc.

Key Drivers for Change and Proposed Responses

The following qualifications and associated 6 skill sets and 65 units of competency are currently being updated.

- *CHC30113 Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care*
- *CHC50113 Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care*
- *CHC40113 Certificate IV in School Aged Education and Care*
- *CHC50213 Diploma of School Age Education and Care*
- *CHC30213 Certificate III in Education Support*
- *CHC40213 Certificate IV in Education Support*

A key focus of this work is the need for clarification of language and terminology, including assessment requirements and the structure of qualifications.

Proposed Schedule of Work

A major update of the training package is currently underway and due for completion in 2018. There is no further work scheduled for the training package products under the remit of this IRC until such time as this current update is complete.

It is possible that the current project will highlight the need for additional requirements. For example imported electives in qualifications need to align to identified skills needs, some of which will be determined by regulatory bodies or the recommendations of reports focused on children's health and well being, including those from the Royal Commissions mentioned previously in this document. Consultation workshops and feedback have highlighted that the sector values implementation information such as that in Companion Volumes and Implementation Guides, as well as tools to promote consistency in quality and assessment outcomes. There is a range of strong evidence based data for the sector however there have also been areas highlighted for further research and analysis. For example the nature of job roles in the education support sector has been identified as an area where clarity is required due to the changing nature and range of work.

IRC Sign-off

The 2018 Industry Skills Forecast will be signed off by the IRC Chair before submission to the AISC.

END